THE SATURDAY EVENING POST.

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BY THE DEAD.

WRITTEN FOR THE SATURDAY EVENING POST,

Love, you are still in a slumber deep;
Say, will you waken to smile or weep?

Or is it not slumber that holds you here
In this white, strange silence? Answer, dear!

I forgot. You are deaf to the words I say;
The soul that would answer has gone away.

And yet it seems that your lips must unclose,
And your eyelids lift from their long repose.

Dead? Dead? Oh, you are not! It cannot be!
Hearken, darling, and answer me!

See, here is a rose, a great white rose,
Sweet as the summer, and pansy blows,

I have brought them to you. Oh, darling, wake,
And wear them, love, for our sweet loves' sake.

I kiss you, darling, on lid and lip,
That the seal of silence may from them slip.

In the magic touch of a lover's kiss;
Waken, darling, and answer this.

Dead, she is dead! and my brain is weak!
Though I called for an age, she would never speak!

EBEN E. REXFORD.

RAVENSWOOD;

OR,

The Raftsmen Of The Delaware.

WRITTEN FOR THE SATURDAY EVENING POST,

BY BURR THORNBURY.

THE FRESHET. PHILIP RESCUES FLOSSA FROM THE RUINED MILL.

Entering the hall, Mrs. Montgomery crossed it quickly and proceeded to the dining-room in search of Irene. She was not there.

"She has become impatient at my supposed protracted stay in the parlor, and has doubtless gone there herself," thought Mrs. Montgomery. "Yet I did not hear her."

She was returning to the hall, when, as she passed the library door, Irene stepped out. She was pale and agitated.

"How did they receive the news?" she asked. "You were gone long, mother."

Mrs. Montgomery entered the library, and motioned her daughter to follow. When the door was closed she said:

"I have not seen the gentlemen yet, Irene. They are still ignorant of what has taken place."

The young lady looked her amazement. Mrs. Montgomery explained the alarming cause of her delay. Irene listened in wonder, dismay and momentary horror—wonder at the whole communication, dismay at the presence of Gaines, and horror at the situation of Flossa. The latter emotion was only transient. Pity and mercy pleaded with her to soften her heart, but hatred and jealousy soon mastered the nobler feelings.

"And the—the girl will perish?" she asked, not without a touch of horror in her tones.

"*Has* perished by this time," replied her mother in cruel, calm speech.

"She will vex us no more," continued Mrs. Montgomery, "but there is danger to us still. Irvin Gaines lives and holds our secret. If he manages to escape, he will have a terrible power over us. His silence could be purchased by continual payment of gold, but he has had enough already. I mean to deliver him to his pursuers. He is armed and will fight to the death. He will be killed, for the raftsmen, and indeed the whole community, are terribly incensed at the doings of this organization of villains. The least resistance on his part—and he will not surrender only to become the prey of the gallows—will bring destruction upon him. With his death there will be none left to make us afraid. Do you not see our opportunity? I dread his capture alive, for if tried and convicted, as he surely would be, in his last hours he might make confession. He must perish before the law takes him in hand."

"Traitress!" at this moment spoke a voice at the door—a voice terrible in its vengeful tones. It was Irvin Gaines who uttered the word.

"That is your game, is it, woman? I saw treachery in your face, and felt you would play me false."

Mrs. Montgomery started back in dismay and terror. Irene would have screamed, but she was paralyzed by fear.

The desperado drew a weapon from his bosom, and quickly closing the door, shut himself in the room with his terrified prisoners.

"The slightest outcry, and you die," he said in low, deadly tones, as he levelled his pistol. "I'm in a tight place, and if I perish you go with me. Open that window," he commanded.

The trembling woman obeyed him. He looked excitedly out, a glare in his eyes like that of a hunted beast. He moved a step or two toward the window, then retreated, and again placed his hand firmly upon the door-knob. His perplexity and fear were pitiful to witness.

"What shall I do?" he said. "I thought to leap out, rush to the river, and swim across the branch to the shore. But I would be discovered. I must remain here. I will go again to the cellar. Betray me, woman, as you would like to, and I will live long enough to tell all. I've a mind to murder you here, and then blow my own brains out." He again raised the weapon threateningly, and, expecting a discharge, both the cowering figures screamed in uncontrollable terror.

Hurrying footsteps were instantly heard approaching from different directions. Gaines uttered a fearful oath, and with one wild bound leaped through the open window to the portico beyond. But danger was now behind him and before him. A party of the pursuing raftsmen had just arrived at the front of the mansion, and were expressing to the alarmed servants their belief that the villain of whom they were in search had managed to secrete himself in the house.

"There he goes now!" exclaimed one, as the flying figure of the distracted Gaines appeared.

A half dozen sturdy fellows sprang to to seize him.

"Surrender!" they shouted. "Surrender or you are a dead man!"

Gaines turned upon them, desperate and defiant. The river he knew would intercept his retreat, and it was vain to think of escape by swimming, even across the narrow creek, with his pursuers so close upon him. He resolved not to be taken alive, for the gallows would then be his fate. He thought of revenge upon the woman who had used him as a tool, and now desired to betray him, but even that was not to be accomplished.

"Surrender!" repeated the raftsmen as they came nearer. For answer he raised his weapon and fired. One of his assailants fell, and a mad cry of vengeance arose from the others. An answering shot followed the discharge of the villain's pistol, and with a ball in his breast he reeled and fell to the ground. The raftsmen were upon him in an instant, and though he had drawn a second weapon, he had neither strength nor opportunity to use it.

"We have him safe now!" cried a triumphant voice.

"Is he dead?" asked another.

"Not dead, but as good," was the answer.

Dr. Kirke, Frank Leighton and Philip Wayne, hearing the sudden tumult, the outcries and the pistol-shots, came hurriedly out.

They hastened toward the group on the lawn; the cries of the servants, the wild gesticulations and the general excitement causing them the greatest wonder and alarm.

"Another patient for you, doctor," said one of the raftsmen to whom he was known, as the three approached.

"What has happened?" was the wondering inquiry of them all.

Frank Leighton and Philip Wayne, recognizing their old enemy, exclaimed in utter amazement—

"Great Heavens! It is Irvin Gaines."

"Yes," answered the wounded villain, who retained his consciousness, and knew the two young men at once. "It is Irvin Gaines, but he won't trouble the world much longer. This is a death wound, ain't it, doctor?"

He turned despairingly to the physician, who was hastily examining the small red opening in his breast. It was near the region of the heart, and the injury would probably prove fatal.

Dr. Kirke did not give a direct answer to the question. He did not usually commit himself until his deductions were carefully made.

"I know it *is*," continued the suffering man, "but I want to live an hour or two yet. Can I be kept alive that long?"

"Yes," answered the doctor, confidently.

The wounded villain was carried into the house and placed on the same couch that had borne the nobler form of Starway. The whole household, together with the raftsmen, crowded, or attempted to crowd, into the room, until Dr. Kirke was obliged to request a little forbearance.

Mrs. Montgomery and her daughter were in an agony of apprehension, seeing that Gaines retained his senses, and would probably live long enough to make a confession that would involve them in disaster. They looked at each other in hopeless panic, fearing every moment that from the mouth of the villain would come the words that would prove their ruin.

And Frank Leighton too was greatly excited, though a rising hope mingled with his emotion. As it was believed that Gaines had a hand in the abduction of Edith, might he not be induced to give information that would lead to her release? The anxious lover approached the outlaw.

"I adjure you, Irvin Gaines," he said, solemnly, "if you know aught of the whereabouts of Edith Williams—"

"Why good Lor'!" interrupted Jem, the groom, in amazement at this point. "Don't you know 'bout *her* yet, Massa Frank? I spect you was dere by dis time."

Frank looked bewildered.

"Of whom are you speaking," he then demanded, a sudden revelation, caught from the negro's looks more than his words, breaking upon him.

"Why, good Lor'!" ejaculated the astonished darkey, who of course thought that the young man heard the happy news. "I means *Miss Edith*. She's home!"

"Edith home?" he gasped.

Philip Wayne looked into the beaming eyes of his friend.

"Oh, Philip! can this be true?" asked the latter, trembling with the fulness of his sudden joy.

"It must be," said Philip, rapturously, as by Leighton's hurrying hand he was drawn from the room.

"I must go to her at once," said Frank. "Jem, I can cross, can I not?"

Jem had followed the two from the apartment, a curious, wondering expression upon his face. He seemed amazed, delighted, mystified and alarmed, all at the same time.

"Yes," he said, in answer to Frank's question. "But Pete mus' do de rowin'. Dreffel high ribber dis mornin'. Here, Pete!" he called to a stalwart fellow of his own race. "You take Massa Frank across de creek, and don't you dround him nuther, case he's feelin' like libbin now, I know."

Pete came, and the little party hurried down to the landing. Jem kept close to Philip, muttering excitedly to himself and regarding the young man very strangely.

"I wonder if *he* knows 'bout *his* gal," soliloquized the negro. "Takes it mighty easy if he does. Can't be; Massa Frank didn't know nuthin' ob de good news, and how should Massa Phil know de bad news? Dreffel cyrus too," he concluded, scratching his woolly pate in his perplexity, as he went along.

The boat was being unchained. At this point Jem mustered resolution enough to inquire of Philip if he "had heard de *bad* news?"

"What bad news?" asked Philip.

"Oh, Lor'! jest as I thought!" cried Jem, in woful perturbation.

"What do you mean?" demanded the young man.

"Oh, Massa Philip, let's us go back to de house. Let Massa Frank go widout you. I'se got somethin' orful to tell you."

Frank, who was fearfully impatient, could not brook this brief delay, and called to his friend to enter the boat.

"Push off without me," directed the latter. "I will follow soon. Jem here has something important to say to me, and wishes me to remain awhile."

Frank looked surprised, but calling to Philip to come as soon as possible, he ordered Pete to take the oars.

"Now, Jem, what is it?" asked Philip, turning to his sable companion with a fearing, expectant look. "Are you crazy? or fooling me?"

"Oh, good Lor', no! It's 'bout de oder gal—Miss Glossie."

"What about her?" demanded Philip, paling with a sickening apprehension of evil to his betrothed.

"Why, she was stoled away las' night. Dat man up dere done it."

"My God!" ejaculated the lover. "Is this true, Jem? How long have you known it? Why did you not tell me before?"

"Thought you *did* know it, Massa Philip. De ladies at de house do, and de serbants—eberybody but you and Massa Frank. Mighty strange, dis, but den de debbil's to pay dis mornin', eberywhere. De raf'smen, dey knows, and dey'll help you find her. It's dat wounded feller's work, and mebby he'll tell where she is—de dyin' sinner!"

Philip rushed distractedly toward the house, followed by the pitying Jem.

"Takes it mighty hard," muttered the negro. "Thought it queer if he knowed 'bout dat gal bein' stoled las' night."

On reaching the front of the mansion, Philip met several of the raftsmen coming hurriedly out.

"That kidnapper in there," said one, addressing him, "says the girl he carried off is on Eagle isle, tied fast in the old mill, ready to drown."

"Heaven be merciful! the freshet will carry the whole structure off!"

"But if we hasten we may save her."

"Quick then!" cried the distracted lover. But a new and appalling thought occurred to him.

"How can we reach the place?" he questioned in despair. "It is impossible to row against this current, and the isle is up stream."

"We must cross to the Pennsylvania side, carry our boat up the shore, and when a sufficient distance above the isle we can strike out and reach it."

"God grant that there be time for all that," prayed Philip.

A number of the raftsmen had hurried to the boat-harbor at the foot of the lawn that stretched to the river side, and selecting a long, light four-oared batteau, they carried it on their shoulders to the western shore of the island. It was there launched, and four of the best oarsmen present jumped in. Others, accompanied by Philip, followed in a smaller boat that was at hand. Their services would be needed when the opposite shore was gained to assist in transporting the batteau to the point where it was to be again launched.

After reaching the Pennsylvania shore, it was necessary to proceed quite a distance above the head of the island, in order to insure themselves against being carried by the force of the current so far down stream that the place of Flossa's confinement could not be gained. All this consumed time, and to the distracted and impatient lover an age seemed passing in those few minutes.

As soon as a point was reached far enough above the isle to make their landing thereon certain, the batteau was launched and quickly pushed off. Philip had sprang for an oar the moment the boat was placed in the water—but one of the raftsmen, who in the emergency had made himself commander, shouted,

"Yield your place to Wilton, please. He is a steadier hand than you. We've not a moment to lose."

Philip obeyed, though he was a skilful rower, for he felt that his terrible excitement unfitted him for the most effective exertion. He seated himself in the prow, leaning wildly forward as if he thereby thought to accelerate the speed of the boat since he was denied the use of an oar.

Eagle isle was now in view, but its area had been so greatly diminished by the covering waters, that it looked like little more than a huge boulder-head, save that the ruined mill lifted its crazy timbers above it.

"Pull, men, pull," urged Philip, though the strong-armed raftsmen were exerting themselves to the utmost.

"Oh, God! if she has already perished!" he moaned to himself. "How fearfully the river has risen!"

"This storm must have commenced on the mountains a day or two before it did here," remarked one of the raftsmen. "The rain of last night alone wouldn't have caused such a rise. The upper waters have reached us."

The course of the boat was diagonally toward the isle, and it required the most desperate exertions of the oarsmen to prevent it being carried too far below to make a landing. The force of the current had not been overestimated. But the gallant fellows did nobly, and the isle was soon approached. A few more strokes and it would be reached. They were given with a desperate vigor. The soft sandy soil, up which the water was perceptibly advancing, was reached, and the crew sprang from the boat.

Two remained to secure it from being swept away; the others, headed by Philip, rushed toward the ruined structure which formed Flossa's prison.

"The water has entered the lower story," was the anguished exclamation of Philip as the mill was reached. "Oh, God, if she has perished!" he repeated, almost despairing to find her alive. He entered the dismal ruin, wading through the turbid water that swirled in at the doorway and flooded the broken floor. "Flossa! Flossa!" he cried as he looked wildly around. "She is not here! Can that wicked man have directed us falsely?"

"Perhaps she is in the upper story," suggested one of the raftsmen. "Even a devil would not confine her here, knowing that the water would surely reach her."

Philip, who stood nearest the rickety and unsafe stairway, heedless of the danger of a precipitation into the chaos below, hastened, forlornly hoping, to the floor above.

"Flossa! Flossa!" he again cried, his voice almost drowned in the awful rushing roar of the swollen river.

No answer came to his piteous call; but his quick, anxious, sweeping glance as he passed to the further corner of the room, discovered the object it sought.

Bound to an immovable appurtenance of the mill—aye, cruelly, firmly bound, as Gaines, the wretch, had said, though not in the lower story—was the fair, fainting form of Flossa!

"My darling! my suffering, rescued one!" cried the fond lover, his soul rising in gratitude to Heaven even while it filled with a terrible indignation toward the wicked being who had dared thus to wrong his beloved. "Dear Flossa, you are saved! Look up, your Philip is here!"

He had cut the cruel bonds, and knowing that there was not a moment to lose, was bearing her away.

She appeared to revive and to briefly comprehend the fact of her rescue by her lover, for she opened her eyes and murmured faintly but joyously, "Philip, Philip, is it you?"

Then a shudder seized her worn frame, and she relapsed into a condition of unconsciousness.

The boat was reached. Philip deposited his lovely burden in the bottom, bending over her in tenderest solicitude, but grateful, rapturous and confident that she would soon revive. His brave companions, elated beyond measure by the success of their mission, gave one wild, ringing cheer, that rose high above the tumult of the mad waters, and seizing their oars, struck out across the seething, driving surface of the river for Ravenswood.

Anxious watchers from the shore of the island—Irene Atherly was among them—saw the form of the rescued one borne to the boat, heard that rapturous, triumphant cheer.

From the mouths of all but one went back a joyous response. That one was Irene. An awful gloom settled upon her face, an awful purpose was formed in her heart.

"Lost! lost!" she cried, in agony to herself.

"Lost! lost!" when the rejoicing group around her were crying "saved!"

They did not notice the darkness of her countenance—how should they when they did not dream that Flossa's rescue was her doom.

Only momentary was that baleful shadowing of the face of Irene. Then with false smiles and lying words of welcome and congratulation she went forward with the rest and greeted the hero of the day—the handsome, joyous, *glorious* Philip; for truly so he looked with the light of his great happiness illuminating his face.

Oh, if he could only have seen as she addressed him what was in her heart.

The landing of the rescuing party had been effected at the foot of the wide lawn that sloped down to the southern point of the island.

Philip had lifted the now reviving figure of Flossa from the boat and had gently placed her for a brief rest upon the green sward, one of those present first flinging down a garment as a protection from the wet.

It was at this moment that Irene, keeping her face from the confused gaze of the girl she hated, had spoken to Philip. First offering her false congratulations to the happy and unsuspecting lover she had said:

"Bring her to the house. I will precede you."

And, hastening in advance, her face now deathly white and calm, but her heart beating and bounding with fiercest passion, she reached the house and joined her mother.

The two gazed into each other's eyes with unspeakable emotion in their looks.

"She is saved?" said Mrs. Montgomery, hoarsely.

"Yes," answered her daughter in the same dreadful tone. "And they are bringing her here!—*here to Ravenswood!*"

The tone of the emphasized words was tragic; the manner of the speaker dismayed and frantic.

"*She* at Ravenswood!" exclaimed Mrs. Montgomery in bitter accents.

"Hush, mother; they are coming. Let us welcome them as—as" She did not proceed with her irony, but paused suddenly and asked—

"What has *he* said yet?"

"Nothing; he is too weak to speak. But he will revive. Till then—"

"Till then you are mistress here. Let us make good use of the brief time that remains to us to be hospitable."

A horrible calmness was in the first sentence. A deadly irony in the next.

"Receive them, mother," entreated Irene. "I must not let that fair-faced thing recognize me. I must keep out of her sight until I am ready to meet her."

She turned away, the strange look she wore deepening and darkening, and her mother went to meet the slowly-approaching party. The simulated warmth and welcome and delight of her manner were wonderful; while down in her heart were hatred, dread, anguish and despair.

"We will tarry but briefly," said Philip in response to her hospitable offers. "Your house has two patients already, and we will not tax you further. We will cross to the mainland and join Edith. Flossa has revived sufficiently to be conveyed further, and she appears to greatly prefer to be taken to her Quaker friends at once."

Philip did not know the cause of Flossa's anxiety to be taken from the island, but in his ignorance ascribed it to a preference for familiar surroundings. He knew she had not yet been informed of the return of Edith—his words to Mrs. Montgomery in relation thereto had been spoken aside—and he wondered a little at the manifest reluctance with which she accepted an invitation to proceed to an upper chamber and change her soaked garments for dry ones.

Irene was not visible, and this, too, was remarked by the young man. A few simple restoratives had been administered to Flossa, and when she descended in more comfortable garments, she again expressed her desire to leave the island at once. She felt painfully uneasy in the presence of Mrs. Montgomery, notwithstanding the apparently kind attentions of that individual. She knew that the woman was her enemy, though only fair words had been addressed her by Mrs. Montgomery. But a pure, sensitive nature like Flossa's is not to be deceived by professions. She saw that Mrs. Montgomery was painfully agitated, though the external signs of it were few, and she felt that her own presence had much to do with the perturbation of the mistress of Ravenswood.

In response to Flossa's pleading request to be conveyed from the island, Philip said:

"We will go at once, my darling; but you seem to be strangely anxious to depart. Perhaps you have heard of Edith's return," he added, with a delighted look that assured her he could not be jesting. She knew he could not jest on such a subject.

"Oh, Philip!" she cried, joyfully, "Edith has then been found. I know it by your looks. Why did you not tell me before? Oh, I am so rejoiced."

He smiled brightly, as he replied:

"I feared the good news would excite you too much. But since you are to meet her soon, you must know it beforehand."

"Oh, Heaven be thanked! How glad, how grateful I am! Tell me all about it, Philip."

"I know nothing of the particulars—nothing but the single joyful fact of her return. We will soon learn the rest. And now we will go."

Thanking all who had assisted him in the rescue of Flossa, and expressing to Mrs. Montgomery his obligations for her "kindness," in company with his betrothed, Philip departed, not forgetting to leave a message for Starway.

"Oh, the dear Lord be praised!" exclaimed Flossa fervently, thinking of Edith as they went along.

"Yes," said Philip with the same simple fervor. "The Lord be praised! We have so much to be thankful for to-day."

Tenderly supporting the happy girl, and accompanied by several of the raftsmen who had borne such an important part in the startling occurrences of the morning, Philip conducted her to the western landing.

Boats were at hand, and though the current of the stream was very strong, no danger would attend the passage with a skilful oarsman. The rapids foamed and roared below, but there was no reason to fear being drawn into the dashing breakers.

Flossa was seated in one of the smaller boats, and Philip was to row it. Before entering, he again expressed his gratitude to his brave assistants in the morning's venture, the fair girl heartily joining him. He regretted the necessity of parting from them so soon, and asked them to present themselves, whenever opportunity offered, at his home, where he would be rejoiced to see them.

The gallant fellows made gratified responses, with a thousand good wishes for the happy two.

The boat was unchained, and Philip was about taking the oars, when Irene Atherly came hurrying down to the water-side.

"With your permission, Mr. Wayne, I will take passage with you," she said, a look of misery and desperation in her face.

Philip was too happy to see anything but happiness in others. The morn was golden to him, and he thought it so to all.

"Certainly," he answered heartily. "There is room for another. You wish of course to see Edith."

Smiling and gallant, he assisted her into

the boat. She never once glanced at Flossa, who, trembling and awed at the strange manner of the beauty, sat silent in the stern of the little craft.

The boat left the shore.

With a strange, sickening foreboding of evil, Flossa watched her lover and her rival as the middle of the stream was approached.

CHAPTER XXV.

CRASH UPON CRASH.

Dr. Kirke had not been attracted from the couch of the wounded Gaines by the excitement that attended the rescue of Flossa from the isle, and her landing at Ravenswood. The condition of the villain was critical, and it was not likely that he would live until noon, if so long. He seemed fully aware of this himself, though the physician's assurance that a few hours of life still remained for him was gladly received. But he felt that he was dying; and, as the worst men will, in the final hour, he desired to make some amends for the crimes of his career, and to undo in part the wrong he had committed against the innocent Flossa.

"Doctor," he said at last, in a voice weak, but calm and rational, "let a sufficient number of reliable witnesses be gathered. I have an important deposition to make, and the sooner I speak the better."

Mrs. Montgomery was in the room when he said this, but he appeared to ignore her presence, and even to forget his desire for revenge. It was justice he wished now to do. Few are the enmities that continue strong in the hour of death—the soul cannot go hating into the realm of shadows; and so Irvin Gaines thought no more of revenge upon his employer and confederate, but of justice to the wronged girl he had falsely called his niece.

Mrs. Montgomery heard his request in terror and despair. Her agitation and distress of mind, which had been great from the moment of the appearance of Gaines in her house, were now more apparent than ever. Hitherto, in the confusion that had prevailed, they had escaped notice, but Dr. Kirke's attention was now fastened upon her.

"She is strangely excited," he thought. "Can the statements this man wishes to make have any unpleasant bearing upon herself?"

The witnesses were called, and gathered around the couch of the now dying man.

Mrs. Montgomery had left the apartment while they were being collected—which was quickly done—but she now returned, her agitation partly suppressed, but her manner none the less suspicious to a watchful eye. In her hand she bore a glass containing a bright-looking liquid.

"Your patient is very weak, doctor," she said, in a tone that was unnatural in its calmness. "Here is a cordial that will serve to give him temporary strength. Will you administer it?"

The physician took the goblet, but did not offer its contents to Gaines—for the latter, sinking as he was, had heard the words of the woman, though they had been spoken somewhat aside, and had seen the transfer of the liquid from her hand to that of Dr. Kirke's. An instantaneous suspicion communicated itself to the mind of the dying villain. Thinking the draught was about to be offered him, he motioned it away, and catching the expression of his countenance, Dr. Kirke placed the goblet upon a small side-table without a word.

"If you have anything to say," he then remarked to Gaines, "it is time you were speaking."

A silence fell upon the listening group as they awaited the expected revelation.

Mrs. Montgomery, having played her last card, as the outlaw commenced his confession, moved quickly and quietly to the side-table, and, removing therefrom the goblet, raised it to her lips and drank its glowing contents. So intent were the others upon what Gaines was saying that not one noticed this act.

Moving forward, the desperate woman seated herself in the circle of listeners, and calmly awaited whatever might follow.

"My real name," the outlaw had commenced, "is not Irvin Gaines, but Henry Burkton. I am a native of this county, and am personally known to some of its citizens, though the greater part of my life has been spent outside of its limits. My career since early manhood, as I now with remorse confess, has been one of dishonesty and crime. I am a member of the organization known as River Rick's band, and have assisted directly or indirectly in many of the wicked enterprises of that law-defying league. Of it, if I have strength, I will say more later—but my first object must be to restore a wronged and suffering girl to her rights. I refer to the young lady known as Flossa Gordon, who I have pretended is my niece, but who, in truth, is not of the remotest kin to me. Last night I abducted her, but I now thank Heaven that my evil designs against her failed, and that she has been rescued from threatened death.

"Flossa Gordon, so known, is the daughter of Charles Montgomery, and the rightful heiress to this estate of Ravenswood."

At this announcement there was a deep sensation, and all eyes were turned upon Mrs. Montgomery who sat unmoved though deathly pale in her chair.

"It is true," she said calmly in answer to the silent, wondering inquiries expressed in the faces of those around her. "Let the man proceed with his statements."

Gaines, as we will still call him, paused after making his astounding declaration, but now resumed in language whose correctness surprised his hearers—so different was it from his usual rudeness. "Years ago, as doubtless some of you remember, Charles Montgomery, a widower with one child, resided on this island which was his paternal inheritance. He married Emily Atherly, and shortly afterward died, leaving his little daughter to the care of her stepmother—the woman yonder."

He motioned feebly toward Mrs. Montgomery, who with a look of awful calmness and despair confronted the eyes that were again turned upon her.

"Charles Montgomery was a warm-hearted, confiding man, and when his will was opened it was found that he had left his estate to his child, with the provision that in case she should not live to inherit it, the whole was to go to his widow and then to her daughter—Miss Irene Atherly. Fatal provision! Emily Montgomery soon grew to look upon the little orphaned Flossa—for that is her true name—as an obstacle to the interests of her own child. She wished her removed, that Irene might be heiress of Ravenswood. She hired *me* to do the work—not to murder the girl, but to cause it to be supposed that she was dead. We plotted together cunningly. Flossa was secretly conveyed to the wilderness, while at the same time it was made to appear that she had been drowned. Her hat was found floating in the river, and the strongest circumstantial evidence was adduced to lead to the conclusion desired by the enemy of the child. The thing succeeded. Flossa Montgomery was thought to be dead, and Ravenswood became the inheritance of another. Of all this, proof can be obtained, if further proof be needed, of the old nurse of Flossa, who became an unwilling partner in the crime, and whom we were forced to remove to compel her to keep silence. She still lives at Runkhannock, on the upper Delaware. The identity of the true heiress of Ravenswood can be established in various ways when the matter is fully investigated. As partial atonement for the evil I have assisted to do, I make this, my dying confession, not actuated by the spirit of revenge, but in the hope—"

A cry of mortal agony at this moment escaped the lips of Mrs. Montgomery. Throwing up her arms, she fell forward, her features distorted with pain, and a frothy substance issuing from her mouth.

Several, the doctor among them, sprang to help her, but no earthly aid could benefit the wretched, wicked woman. In a few moments she expired. The liquid she had swallowed contained a deadly poison. She had attempted to have it administered to Gaines in the hope that his confession would be thus forestalled; but she had failed, and in her despair had drained the glass herself.

This dreadful interruption had hardly occurred before another alarm arose. In explanation of it, we return to the three whom we left mid-stream in the boat.

As the middle of the stream was reached, Irene, who with averted face had been darkly gazing into the hurrying waters, casting now and then a quick fierce glance at Philip, suddenly sprang upright in the boat, her eyes lighting with a look, a compound of love, jealousy, hatred and despair, exclaiming:

"Philip Wayne, I love you; but since I cannot be yours in this life, we will die together."

Her manner was that of a maniac, and the young man was astounded beyond measure by her strange words. His amazement was quickly increased, for as she finished speaking, the mad girl seized one of the oars and endeavored to wrest it from Philip's hold and from its place in the socket.

Flossa screamed in terror. Philip, utterly amazed, resisted the attempt to dispossess him of the oar, knowing that the safety of all depended upon a rapid and direct passage to the shore, as the rapids, into which they might be drawn, were roaring and foaming just below them.

"My God! what is the meaning of this, are you mad, Irene?"

She made a desperate effort to seize the oar; a struggle of course ensued; Irene, in her fury and blindness, lost her balance and fell overboard.

A cry of horror arose from the lips of Philip and Flossa, echoed by those on the island-shore who had witnessed the tragic scene. A wild, despairing cry was uttered by the perishing girl—the suicide as she certainly was.

Philip would have sprung into the rushing current and endeavored to save her—though the act would have been madness—but in so doing he must have sacrificed Flossa, for the boat was already being drawn into the swifter current, and once in those wild waters they would surely perish.

"She is lost!" he cried, in horrified tones, as he replaced the oar and pulled desperately for land. It required his utmost efforts to keep the little bark from being carried downward to that fearful vortex.

"We are saved," at last he cried, "but, oh, Flossa! where is Irene? She would have had us perish with her."

He dared not turn his eyes in the direction of the Rapids, knowing that they had already engulfed her, and that no aid could be extended her.

Flossa shuddered and trembled with horror, and when the shore was gained she had hardly strength to leave the boat.

"My poor suffering one," said Philip, as after drawing up the boat he came to her assistance, "you have been cruelly tried since yestereve, and just now, when I thought you safe, you were most in danger. Irene Atherly was your enemy also."

"Yes," sighed the distressed girl, "she loved you, Philip, and hated me; but I did not think she would do this thing. Oh, Philip, *I* could have given you up, if—if—"

"Hush, Flossa. It is a retribution. She has perished by her own act. It is horrible—the more so because we know there was murder in her heart toward us. God have mercy on the soul of the misguided girl. Come, my darling; let us leave this spot. I will take you to Edith, and then return."

They moved from the place, turning not once toward the scene of the late dreadful occurrence.

Irene after her fall into the water was swiftly borne to the awful death she had resolved that others should share with her. That one despairing cry escaped her, but no other. Her white hands tossed above the flood; her long hair tangled in the current. There was a swifter sweep toward the roaring chasm of water, a brief glimpse of her struggling, drowning form, and then all was over. The waters claimed their prey, and seaward in that mighty stream the lifeless figure of the wretched Irene was borne.

The raftsmen who on the island-shore had lingered to see the boat safely across, when they beheld the horrifying result of Irene's wicked attempt to destroy herself and the others, ran wildly down the river-side toward the point that projected into the Rapids, but were powerless to extend any help.

They saw the waters overwhelm her, and then they hurried to communicate the startling intelligence to those at the mansion. It was their excited coming that caused the second alarm that followed so closely upon the death of Mrs. Montgomery.

The greatest confusion and excitement prevailed among the servants and others gathered at Ravenswood. Dr. Kirke appeared to be the only rational and collected person present. The events of the night and morning were certainly sufficient to astound and unnerve the strongest and calmest.

The news of the suicide of both Mrs. Montgomery and her daughter soon spread throughout the adjacent region, and before noon a great throng of people had gathered on the Pennsylvania side of the river, while all who could obtain passage crossed to the island.

As on all occasions when an assemblage of excited persons takes place, a cool directing head is needed to lead in what may be necessary to do, so it was here. And Dr. Kirke was that individual. He attended to his patients—Starway and Gaines, the former of whom was not yet to be left alone, and the latter of whom we know was dying; he directed that the coroner be sent for, and that the witnesses of the death of Irene Atherly be retained to give their testimony in the case.

Irvin Gaines finished his confession, giving information that did not directly concern any of the characters of our story, but such as would lead to the extermination of the dreaded band of river-robbers. He stated in what manner corroborative evidence of what he had declared regarding Flossa could be obtained, and then, asking Heaven's pardon for his many crimes, he died.

Philip Wayne, accompanied by Frank Leighton, returned to the island, and was rejoiced to learn that the mystery attending the parentage of his betrothed was cleared up. He had been confident that she would prove to be other than Gaines had at first asserted, but that she was the daughter of his father's old friend, Charles Montgomery, and the rightful heiress of Ravenswood, was astounding indeed.

Of the communication of this fact to Flossa we will not speak; nor of the joyous occurrences that preceded it—the restoration of Edith Williams to her parents—her meeting with her lover—with Flossa—and the general joy that followed.

Edith was greatly shocked to learn of the terrible death of her friend Irene—as indeed were all—and the news of Mrs. Montgomery's tragic end was horrifying. But as a stern justice seemed operating to reveal the truth, punish the guilty and restore the wronged and defrauded Flossa to her rights, while the retributive result was regarded with due solemnity, the happiness of the re-united friends was not to be dimmed thereby.

The body of Mrs. Montgomery after the inquest was claimed by some friends of the deceased, and quietly removed from the island. That of Irene was never recovered, and human eyes may never have seen what Irene herself in her vision saw, "a dead face floating upon the surface of the river."

(TO BE CONTINUED.)

MURPHY'S MASTER.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "LOST SIR MASSINGBERD."

CHAPTER VII.

IN CHARGE.

While Robert was still hesitating whether to remain where he was, alone, or to return to Mulvaney's, Murphy reappeared, and bade him accompany him into the town to procure his outfit, for which Mr. Denton had provided the means. The warning which he had just received respecting the danger of the connection he was thus about to form, was still ringing in his ears, and had not been without its effect; it had manifestly been given out of gratitude to himself, and not at all with any desire to prejudice him against his would-be benefactor; and, moreover, the very fact of Kavanagh's having concealed his own name (as he had manifestly done) from one on such intimate relations with him as "Miss Mary," was no small corroboration of her words. If he was "Mr. Wilson" to *her*, it was pretty certain that he had very valid reasons for adopting an alias as respected others; and an alias, as even Robert was aware, is not ordinarily used except by persons who are at odds with the law of the land. But if he should decline what good Fortune now offered to him, he might starve before the next turn of her wheel. He had absolutely no other means of livelihood, and the share he had already taken in Kavanagh's affairs might seriously affect his procuring any. In accepting this outfit at his hands, he felt he was taking the most decisive step that life had yet presented to him, and it might well give him pause. In the end, however, he did accept it; and what seemed to him a most ample supply of clothes and other necessaries into the bargain.

The sense of his having thus thrown in his lot with his new master seemed also to extend to his companion. Murphy's manner toward him at once changed for the better, and he became communicative, if not confidential. He informed him that Mr. Kavanagh was going to take a good many of "his people" with him to foreign parts, including some of "the boys" from Mulvaney's; and that these last were to be put for the present under Robert's personal supervision.

"Here is the money out of which you are to pay for their keep in town, and their passage to Liverpool, and for which you will be accountable to the young masther. And there are tools, such as emigrants use, and seeds to buy, and even ready-made houses—the estimates for which you will make out at home from papers that I shall give you."

For the remainder of his stay at Mulvaney's which extended for several days, Robert could no more complain of finding time heavy on his hands. The accounts which he had to deal with were really upon an extensive scale, and demanded his best attention, and when he was not engaged with them, the specimens of humanity placed under his control afforded him occupation of another sort. From them, indeed, he learned far more of their own affairs, and of those of his employer, than perhaps the latter had bargained for. Mr. Frank Kavanagh was, it seemed, the proprietor of a large estate in Tipperary, and had been mixed up with certain illegal proceedings which these gentlemen euphoniously termed "the troubles." He was beloved by his tenants, or, at all events, by the poorer portion of them; and having failed in some experiment he had attempted, or caused others to attempt, for their benefit—which Robert could not but suspect was no less than a revolution—was now assisting them to emigrate. He had, on the other hand, a younger brother, Louis, who was obnoxious to them, and of whom they never spoke without the preparatory ceremony of spitting on the floor. It was a shame and disgrace to the country, and indeed to the administration of the universe, that such things should be, but, somehow or other, Mr. Frank had been ousted from his property, or at all events a portion of it, by Mr. Louis, who was little better than a Sassenach, notwithstanding the good blood that ran in his veins, but so it was; and now, disgusted with this side of the world, the young master had resolved to push his fortune in the other. What that fortune might be, they did not care to speculate upon, so long as they were permitted to share it; while of the voyage before them, as well as of the place—Australia—to which they were bound, they had the most inaccurate notions.

When the morning came on which Robert left Mrs. Mulvaney's roof—in charge of some half-dozen of "the boys"—for Liverpool, that lady kissed him (as she did all the rest), and bade him God-speed; and so they parted. There was, nevertheless, a certain doubtful trembling in her honest voice, as she spoke that farewell, which did not escape Robert Chesney's notice, and somehow recalled to him the warning that he had received in Herne street, from lips more fair, but not more friendly. It was much too late, however, even if he had wished to do so, to recede from what he had undertaken now, and though the circumstance recurred to him afterward, he forgot it in the incidents of the journey; while, on his arrival at Liverpool, where he reported himself at Lloyd Brothers, according to instructions, he found a letter awaiting him from Lizzy, the contents of which, together with the duties that devolved upon him with respect to the emigrants, gave him plenty of other occupation for his thoughts. Mrs. Alston, always in delicate health, had fallen ill, dangerously so, as he could read through poor Lizzy's transparent expressions of hope—and there was bad news, in another way, of James. The latter was a somewhat morose-tempered lad, easily led where dissipation was in view, and of idle habits. Brought up to assist his father in his duties as gamekeeper, he had contracted a taste for sport, which he was not now in a position to gratify without the most serious risks, though placed amid the greatest temptations to do so. Disappointed in the hope of succeeding to his father's post, and doing only occasional work for a neighboring farmer, he lived on at the old place, where the hares started under his feet, and the pheasants whirred about his ears, with more spare time on his hands than was good for him, and not without acquaintances to point out how profitably he might spend it. In a word, he had taken to poaching, a pursuit which in his case could not long escape detection. Nay, by one person at least it had already been detected; and herein lay for Robert Chesney the bitterest news of all. The man who had discovered the crime was John Rowland, his own step-father, and the use he was making of his knowledge was to endeavor to win Lizzy for himself. Robert could see that, though Lizzy at present could not. She only spoke of Mr. Rowland's forbearance in having spared her brother for her sake, and of his unlooked-for forethought in not having revealed the delinquency to her mother, upon whom such a discovery might just now have had fatal effects.

To be poor, alas! is often to be powerless, and Robert could do no more than warn the innocent girl against the wiles of one whom he himself knew far too well to believe capable of a disinterested act of benevolence. Lizzy's letter had indeed unwittingly corroborated for him certain suspicions of his step-father that had already rendered him uneasy upon her account, and which now went nigh to madden him. Rowland had always disliked him; but of late months his conduct had been so systematically cruel, that he had found it hard to explain it, save on one ground—that of jealousy; and it now occurred to him that his running away from home was the very object that this man had desired, and that his brutal behavior might even have been in part assumed, in order to obtain that end.

Outraged, outwitted, but also a penniless outcast, what could he do, beyond putting the unsuspecting girl upon her guard. When he went on board the ship, and found it crowded, not with men only, but their wives and daughters, how he longed to have had the means at his disposal to have offered the Alstons a passage to the New World: if he could have had his Lizzy with him, safe alike from poverty and persecution, how light of heart, how strong of hope would he not have been! So enraptured, indeed, was he with this idea, that, forgetful of her mother's illness, and of the impossibility of the ship being delayed, if at that moment he could have seen his patron, he would have besought him, notwithstanding the obligation he felt himself already under to him, to assist him still further in this strait. But fortunately for his reputation for sanity, Mr. Frank was not at hand; Murphy even protested that he did not know where he was, and if so, it was certain that none else knew. His absence entailed upon Robert additional duties, which were so far welcome, that they prevented his mind from dwelling on its own sorrow.

CHAPTER VIII.

OUTWARD BOUND.

There were more than two hundred emigrants of both sexes and all ages, though mostly adults, on board the ship, and out of these about sixty came from Mr. Kavanagh's estate, and had their expenses wholly or in part defrayed by him. Mr. Denton was ill, much worse, to all appearance, than when Robert had met him in town, and was recommended by the doctors not to go on board until the last moment; and Murphy, from his ignorance, and bad example as respected indulgence in drink, was worse than useless as a coadjutor. One man only was of help to Robert—a weather-beaten, wiry old fellow of sixty years of age or so, whom "the boys" called Mister Maguire. The "Maguire" was open to little question, but the reason of the "Mister" was by no means self-evident. Except that he had a more intelligent air, his appearance in no way differed from that of his fellow-emigrants; and he shared bunk and board with them in the steerage, and was treated in all respects like the rest. But among "the boys" themselves it was very different; he was evidently held by them in higher consideration than Murphy, notwithstanding that that gentleman enjoyed (as did Robert likewise) the privilege of a second-class berth, and his suggestions rarely failed to command obedience, even from the most unreasonable. His assistance, therefore, was invaluable to one whose delegated authority—in the absence of him who had bestowed it—would not otherwise, perhaps, have had much weight; and moreover, in matters relating to ship-board—of which, of course, Robert knew nothing—he was thoroughly at home; it was pretty certain, indeed, although he did not parade the fact, that at one time in his life, at least, Mr. Maguire had been a sailor. It was not till they had been at Liverpool a week that all was ready for sailing (for the ship being for emigrants only, awaited the convenience of her passengers), and Mr. Denton came on board. He looked very white and ill, and was carried up the side on a sort of litter, and at once conveyed to his own cabin. That of Mr. Kavanagh still stood empty, and the only tidings of him were as vague as before—that he "would join them somewhere on the voyage."

On a certain Saturday morning, the tide serving, and the wind being favorable, the anchor was weighed, and the ship set sail. A few minutes after she began to move, a large black boat shot out from one of the docks ahead of them, and pulled straight for the vessel.

"What is that?" asked Robert, who was standing on the forecastle, of Maguire, who stood beside him.

"That's the police galley," returned he, with a crooked smile, which might, however, have been caused by his having his pipe in his mouth. "I only wish I was the steersman."

"Why?" inquired Robert, simply.

"Because, with this free wind and some unskilful handling of the wheel, there might be a lucky accident."

It was impossible, from his sarcastic tone, as well as from the truculent expression of his eyes, to doubt that what Mr. Maguire intended to express, was, that he would run her down. Robert had seen enough of his new companions to feel small surprise at any enmity they might exhibit toward the police authorities, whether on land or sea; still, his companion's views in that quarter did seem a little "advanced," considering the smallness of the provocation of them.

"Is it usual, then," asked he, "for the police to board vessels at the last moment? They don't mean any particular harm to us, I suppose?"

"I never heard of their meaning any particular good," returned the other, grimly.

Robert himself began to feel uncomfortable. Kavanagh, indeed, was not on board, but he himself and Murphy were, and it was more than possible that it was on their account that this unwelcome visit was about to be paid. Without absolutely wishing that Mister Maguire was at the wheel, he regarded the approach of the galley with considerable anxiety as it drew nearer and nearer. Presently, it reached the ship; and a police inspector, accompanied by two men armed with pistol and cutlass, came on board. The captain was summoned, a written parchment handed to him; and then orders were given to slacken sail, and for all hands, except the women and children, to come on deck. The inspector, with the list of the passengers in his hand, first compared the numbers.

"There are two cabin passengers on the list," observed he curtly.

"There are so," replied the captain; "one is Mr. Denton, whom you will find below, ill in his cot; the other is Mr. Kavanagh, not come on board."

"That remains to be seen," said the inspector significantly. "I must search the ship, and then examine all here. See that no one leaves the deck. Where is this Mr. Denton?" An officer of the vessel accompanied the inspector and one policeman below; the crew and passengers remained where they were; the latter, for the most part excited and alarmed, and watching the guardian of the law as sheep regard a dog, whose intentions, notwithstanding his office, they cannot persuade themselves are friendly. Some wore a more dismayed aspect, as though they had particular cause for misgivings on their own account, and others, a more menacing, as fear or hate had the upper hand. Murphy and Maguire alone, who stood apart by the bulwarks, seemed to take the whole affair as one of course. Yet, from what the latter had just observed to him, Robert knew that this was far from being the case, at least as regarded Maguire; both had their eyes fixed earnestly on the after deck; and a look of intense relief, as Robert fancied, came over their countenances, when presently the three men appeared upon it, after their examination of the cabins. The rest of the ship was next thoroughly searched, and then commenced a personal examination of the astonished passengers.

This was proceeded with after a very extraordinary fashion: every man had to take off his cap, while the inspector carefully passed his hand over the front of the head. When he came to Chesney, to the lad's great relief, he did not delay a second; nor did "Mister Maguire" occupy much more of his attention; but he scrutinized Murphy very particularly. "Is it a lock of my hair you're after, sir?" inquired that gentleman, in a tone of gratified vanity that convulsed his hearers: it was so unlike him to indulge in badinage with the constabulary, that it was clear to Robert that something had put him into high good-humor. Some of the emigrants, on the other hand, were inclined to resent this liberty thus taken with the forelocks, and one of them warned the officer at his peril not to touch one hair of his head. But bore, again, Murphy turned the matter into mirth, by observing: "Sure, Mike, and do you suppose the officer would do it if so be he hadn't got his gloves on?" Finally, the captain himself contributed his quota to the general amusement by taking off his cap and exhibiting a head almost entirely bald, which he begged to offer to the consideration of the examiner. The search having thus proved fruitless, the inspector and his myrmidons took their leave, and the vessel, which had slackened sail in obedience to his orders, resumed her course.

Though cold, the weather was clear and bright, and the sea air and sunshine rapidly restored Robert Chesney's spirits. He had the utmost confidence in Lizzy's fidelity to himself; and since all had been done in putting her on her guard that could be done, what use was there in dwelling on what might after all be an imaginary trouble. But the absence of Mr. Kavanagh began to disturb him some. If the recent visit of the officers of justice had been foreseen, it was easy to understand why Mr. Kavanagh had not put in an appearance; and Robert had judged it probable that he had embarked on board some fishing-smack, or other vessel, for the purpose of being picked up when the Star of Erin (as their own ship was named) had got some few miles down the Channel. But as time went on, and they began to near the open sea, this expectation grew less and less, till it faded altogether. He would have insisted upon an explanation from Mr. Denton, but that that gentleman was reported to be mortally ill, and none but Murphy (out of whom he could get nothing but evasive replies) was admitted to his cabin. There was nothing for it, therefore, but to await as patiently as he could the course of events. He would certainly not have embarked on board the Star of Erin had he not believed that Mr. Kavanagh was to have accompanied him; but after all, he had had his passage paid to the New World, and was even in the receipt of a small salary as general manager for his patron's clients. In this capacity, indeed, he enjoyed a considerable consideration, not only with the emigrants, but with the captain himself. They had been at sea nearly a week, and were out of sight of land, when that gentleman being engaged on deck one evening, happened to request Robert to fetch for him some article out of his cabin. To obey this request it was necessary to pass the door of Mr. Denton's berth, and as he did so, he was surprised to hear from within it the sound of uproarious laughter. It was Murphy's laugh to be sure, but it seemed strange that even Murphy should indulge in such hilarity at the bedside of one supposed to be dangerously ill. On his return, not only was the sound renewed, but the cabin-door opened just as he was about to pass it, and out came both Murphy and Maguire, the former evidently in the highest spirits, the latter cold and quiet-looking as usual.

"I am glad Mr. Denton is better," observed Robert, significantly. "I hope there is now no reason why I should be denied admittance to him?"

"He's ill—he's very ill still," began Murphy, becoming suddenly sedate and sad.

"Stuff and nonsense!" said Maguire contemptuously. "Why keep up this farce, Dick, before Mr. Chesney, who, after all, is one of ourselves?—Mr. Denton can hardly be seen to-night, sir, being in point of fact——"

"Under the influence of a sleeping draught," interrupted Murphy gravely.

"Just so," continued Maguire; "but if you require a plain answer to a plain question or two, I shall be happy to tell you all you want to know over a pipe on the fo'c'sle."

Robert thought it strange that he should be referred to "Mister Maguire" for an explanation of such importance, but he was too desirous of obtaining it to do aught than close with the offer. In a few minutes the two were seated under shelter from the freshening breeze, each with a pipe in his mouth; they were quite alone, except for the watch—the emigrants being all in their bunks even at that comparatively early hour; a thousand stars were shining overhead; the breeze rang in the shrouds, but there was no other sound, save when a wave larger than common struck the vessel on her quarter, and made her shiver from stem to stern.

"Now, what is you want to know, young man?" inquired Maguire.

"I want to know several things," replied Robert, piqued by his companion's tone, and also, perhaps, by the reflection that a confidence had been reposed in him which had been denied to himself. "Firstly, why have I been told by Mr. Denton that Mr. Kavanagh, my employer, was to join us on our voyage, when that was not the case?"

"Let us confine ourselves to facts," replied the other, puffing slowly at his pipe. "Leave out 'when that was not the case,' and the answer is easy; Mr. Kavanagh is on board the ship at this present moment."

(TO BE CONTINUED.)

The Price of Type.

Messrs. Geo. P. Rowell & Co. announce that they have at their warehouse in New York an assortment of type from one of the most celebrated foundries in the world, that of Figgins, London, England, which they will sell at 20 per cent. discount from the American scale, when ordered in fonts of 100 pounds and upward. They also offer to import large fonts on special orders at a greater discount from the American scale, and profess to be able to fill the largest order in eight weeks from the date of its receipt in New York. They supply sorts in large or small quantities from the stock on hand in New York at the American scale rate. They assert that if the present duty on type shall be removed, the price of the article, both of home and foreign manufacture, will immediately fall 40 per cent. below the present scale. Messrs. Geo. P. Rowell & Co. are known as conducting the largest advertising business ever secured by one house, and are also extensive dealers in printing material. They are compelled to import foreign goods because American founders, governed by a close corporation or ring, keep the price vastly too high, and at the same time make it an exception to every other species of merchandise by recognizing no wholesale price; the same amount per pound being charged to the purchaser of five thousand pounds as would be paid by him who wants but fifty.

☞ An exchange says that "Young men in England are forfeiting their marriage engagements in consequence of the high price of coal. They shouldn't stand back on that account. They ought to know that many a man's wife makes the house hot enough for him without the use of a pound of coal."

☞ The Chicago Tribune very justly includes architects and builders who do not understand their business among those known as the "dangerous classes."

ITEMS OF INTEREST.

☞ When a man's neck-tie is untied, how untidy he looks!

☞ A water-pitcher—A fire-engine.

☞ A serious turn—Twisting one's neck.

☞ It is said that when the trains stop at certain way-stations in Indiana, the conductor shouts, "Fifteen minutes for divorces."

☞ A society for the suppression of slang has been formed among the pupils of the Girls' High School of San Francisco. Said a reporter to one of its members: "Your object is a praiseworthy one. Do you think it will succeed in eradicating conversational slang?" Said she, "You bet."

☞ An exchange suggests grimly that "when babies are taken to a concert they ought to be chocked and hung at the door like umbrellas. We know that we incur the displeasure of doting mothers by making this suggestion, but truth is mighty and must prevail."

☞ The ladies of Belleville, Ill., have canvassed their town, and alleviated all cases of suffering they could. They were obliged to marry off thirteen disconsolate old bachelors before their task was completed.

☞ The hotel clerks of the city are to hold a meeting, for the purpose of expelling from their association one of their number who recently appeared in public wearing a shirt that buttoned up in front.—*Kansas City Times.*

☞ The Maine man who has slept on a hay-mow every night for twenty-five years had to get into the house this winter or lose the other ear.

☞ Why does a widow feel her bereavement less when she wears corsets? Because then she is so-laced.

☞ A candidate for the civil service recently gave up his examination in disgust, because he was asked how many bushels of wheat could be bought for ten dollars if one bushel cost forty cents. He said he had not learned anything about wheat, but had always done his sums in potatoes and turnips.

☞ A local paper reports that farmers in Lincoln county, Missouri, have to go ten miles to get water to cook with; the inference being that they don't use it for any other purpose.

☞ The London Echo says that an American newspaper man complains that he belongs to so many secret societies, knows so many "grips," "winks," and other signs of occult fellowship, that he is kept "gripping" and "winking" all the way down the street whenever he shows himself in public.

☞ A professional robber of hen-roosts in Ohio testified in court recently that he could wring two chickens' necks with each hand at the same time, and never permit a single squawk to escape the victims. He refused to disclose how it was done. Perhaps he intends to apply for a patent.

☞ A gushing Connecticut damsel of twenty summers weighs 308 pounds avoirdupois, and with a little attention to diet can do better than that. Her beaux take her out in a double sleigh, built for the purpose; and three of them at a time it takes to do the courting.

☞ A German physiologist has discovered that tobacco smoking by boys "interferes with the molecular changes coincident with the development of tissues, and makes the blood corpuscles oval and irregular at the edge." Any parent can thus ascertain if his boy smokes by merely drawing out a handful of his blood corpuscles and observing their edges.

☞ The rivers in the northern part of Maine are frozen solid down to the bottom, and the people are blasting for fish.

☞ A New Jersey farmer has attended 200 funerals, and thinks he can bring the number up to 201.

☞ "I rise for information," said Mr. ——, M. C. "I am so glad," said Mr. ——, M. C., "for you certainly want some."

☞ A lady friend recently called to condole with a fair young widow upon her bereavement. "I hope you'll excuse me not crying," she said, "but the fact is, crying always makes my nose bleed."

☞ It is best not to skate into air-holes. Most of them are filled with water, and are exceedingly damp.

☞ An insurance agent in Cincinnati is one of the greatest sufferers by the recent severe cold. He has lost part of his cheek by having it frost-bitten.

☞ OLD LADY.—"You know the 'Royal Oak?' Well, you turn to the right, past the 'Jolly Gardeners,' till you come to the 'Red Lion.'" ARTFUL CABBY.—"Oh, don't tell me the 'onses, mum. Name some o' the churches, and then I shall know where I am!" Asks and gets an exorbitant fare without a murmur.—*Punch.*

☞ It is said that one of the jurors who convicted McNulta objected to signing a petition for his pardon, because his father had the contract for building the gallows. Business before pleasure, always.—*St. Louis Democrat.*

☞ An Iowa doctor last week thoughtlessly lanced a pimple on a patient's nose with his vaccinating lancet. It took beautifully, but the patient says that both for appearance and comfort he would almost as lief have small-pox.

☞ The female justices of Wyoming are getting profane, because about two-thirds of the suits decided by them are appealed and the verdicts set aside.

☞ A Connecticut tailor, who could only afford to pay for standing room near the ceiling at one of Lucca's operatic performances, said it was interesting to look down upon the youths in four-dollar seats, of whom he was unable to collect his bill for tailoring.

☞ A man in Indianapolis recently, before committing suicide, interviewed a reporter and dictated the particulars of his history, so that no errors might occur in his obituary notice.

☞ A New York gentleman has discovered that a new sealskin sacque will effect an instantaneous cure upon his wife when she is troubled with a prolonged fit of mental depression.

☞ A Trojan canine recently swallowed $25 worth of national currency belonging to his master, who wants to know if there's any use in sending the animal to the Treasury Department for redemption.

☞ The Missouri Republican asks—"Where is that man who knew that this was to be an open winter, because the frogs hadn't banked up their houses?"

☞ The Paris Liberte has discovered a suicide club. Whoever draws the almond from the cake, at the annual spread, is the victim.

☞ A contributor to one of the magazines estimates that, "if our esteemed ancestor, the late Colonel Adam, had lived till now, and had never trimmed his finger nails, they would have been a thousand yards long."

☞ The opinions of the wise and the experience of the foolish only serve to confuse a poor fellow who is really in doubt whether tobacco is a good, harmless creature, or a diabolical invention of the enemy of the race. It is not, at all events, a "weak invention of the enemy." We receive simultaneously the evidence of a man in England who was a sickly youth with a tendency to consumption, but has been made strong by smoking, in pursuance of the advice of Prof. Huxley, and a learned professor in Paris, who declares that the students under his charge who do not smoke are superior physically and mentally to those who do. What is a fellow to do when the doctors disagree so widely, except to follow his own inclination, as he probably would do in any case?—*New York Mail.*

A subscriber sends us the following verses. We confess to an admiration of the sentiment which inspires them:—

THE SATURDAY EVENING POST.

What makes our home so cheerful?
What makes our people boast?
It is that good old paper,
The Saturday Evening Post.

It is the best old paper
That ever I did see—
If people don't believe it,
Just let them write to me;

And I'll tell them all about it,
And more than they asked to know;
I'll tell them it costs three dollars,
And that is very low.

And then they get a picture
As pretty as can be;
And if they don't believe it,
Just let them try and see.

S. W. S.

Electra Avery's First Ball.

A THANKSGIVING STORY.

WRITTEN FOR THE SATURDAY EVENING POST,

BY CLARE VERNON.

Three weeks before Thanksgiving, many years ago, and snowing furiously.

"Oh! oh!" said fifteen-year-old Electra, rising from the soft depths of the feather-bed and huddling the quilts and sheets around her. "Oh! oh! what big flakes. The ground will soon be covered at this rate," tugging at her night-cap and watching through the window the whirling snow with her sharp gray eyes, that were always on the out-look, and that contrived to see a good share of the funny things and the beautiful things around her. "What a pity I can't go!" said she, giving a final tug at the obstinate cap-string, and causing the glossy black hair to fall in lovely confusion over her shoulders. "Why, only think, I'm fifteen, and I do want to go so bad. I wonder if Brother Ashbel won't take me?" But a blue-eyed vision of a young girl whom Brother Ashbel was devoted to, came before the eye of her reflecting mind, and she consigned that idea to oblivion. "Oh! it's of no use. I'll have to stay at home. But there's one consolation, no one knows I care anything about going," drawing the bed-clothes with a shiver closer to her chilled form, and talking on to herself. How long she would have done so is a matter for speculation, if a voice from the kitchen had not called:

"Come, Electra, you little sleepy-head, get up. I'm going to clear the table off. I guess you'll find father'll not take you to the Lyceum again very soon if that's the way you act. Come, don't lie there any longer. I'm in a hurry."

Thus brought to a realizing sense of her sins, she reached for her clothes and began quite energetically to put them on.

"Why couldn't I have a beau and go stylishly like other girls?" said she, fastening the top button of her dress, and then suspending operations to sigh. "Oh! what's that?" staring at a white spider that was coming down directly in front of her. "Sure sign of a beau, I declare! Wonder who? Benjamin Mosely maybe," blushing painfully, and glancing around to see if any one was within hearing. But no one being in uncomfortable proximity, she continued to gaze at the little herald of a sweetheart, and finally said: "What would Bec say if she heard me talking about *him*? I shan't care about having a beau, even if it is he, if he don't take me to the ball." She was like a great many young ladies, who cared for the escort only that she might be escorted. But the escorts don't know that. Bless you, no; they imagine it is because of their own fascinating selves that those whom they condescend to honor with their attentions are so willing to accompany them to places of amusement. I, for one, sha'n't awaken them from their delightful dream, for

"Where ignorance is bliss, 'tis folly to be wise."

"I declare, I must hurry, or Bec will report me to father, just as sure as fate," said she, putting her white feet upon the cold, bare floor. "My, how cold it is;" and gathering up her shoes and stockings, she retreated to the large, warm kitchen, ignominiously routed by Jack Frost. "Oh, girls," said she, cuddling down by the fireplace, "what made you get home so late? Did David and Nathaniel lose their way?"

"I wouldn't say one word, Electra Avery, when you were in bed two good hours before we were, and not up till this time," said Rebecca, her elder sister, shaking out a white frock that had lately undergone the process of being washed, and reaching another from the foamy suds. While Hannah Stebbins, a girl about Rebecca's age, who was spinning for the Averys, paused occasionally and permitted the buzzing old wheel to rest, while she watched Rebecca's movements with great interest.

"Only think, Lec," said she, "there's going to be a grand ball Thanksgiving night."

"Just as if I didn't know that," said Electra, rather scornfully. "Do tell something that's news, Han. But you say, Bec, I was in bed two hours before you were. Yes, three or four, more likely. You *did* come home soon enough, but probably dear David and poor Nathaniel were *so* cold."

Rebecca laughed heartily, and Hannah started her wheel to hide her confusion. They were both very pretty and very sensible girls of about twenty, and you must imagine how they looked yourself, for I shall not tell you more than that.

"Bec, what are you doing with your and Han's frocks?" was Electra's next observation after sitting down to the table and pouring out a cup of coffee.

"I'm going to bleach them for us to wear to the ball. We're going, Han and I, and so are all the young folks far and near," Rebecca said, putting on an enormous cloak, and preparing to convey the frocks in question to the side-yard, there to become so white as to ravish the eyes of all the ball-goers.

"Ha!" said Electra, "I didn't need to be told you were going: I knew that."

"Very likely you did, but children don't usually know what their elders propose doing," said Rebecca, in the most aggravating "big sister" manner possible.

"Children!" Electra said: "why, I'm going myself. Children!" she repeated, indignantly, forgetting in her wrath to butter her flap-jack.

Rebecca nearly let fall the precious frocks, and Hannah got her yarn into a hopeless tangle in their mirth at these remarks.

"Why, Miss Electra Avery, I beg your pardon for my presumption in styling you a child, but I did not know you had received an invitation," said Rebecca, mockingly, and courtesying to Electra.

"Oh, tell me, Lec, who's going to take you, for I'm dying to know," said Hannah.

"I sha'n't do any such thing," said Electra, frowning at the remembrance that she had received no invitation, and didn't know who would invite her.

"Guess you won't, for you've nothing to tell. I'd be angry with you for telling such stories, if it wasn't so absurd. Only think, Hannah, our Lec's going to the ball. Look out, or she'll get David away from you," Rebecca said, passing out as she did so to avoid the return shot.

"Don't you hope it may not be Nathaniel?" said Hannah, laughing.

"Oh, you needn't worry about your old fogies, I wouldn't go with them. They'd have to look and behave better than they ever thought of doing, before I would look at them twice," said Electra, rather snappishly: for, to tell the truth, she had lost her temper, and was exceedingly easy to provoke.

"Well, Lec, what are you going to wear when you make your grand *entrée*?" said Rebecca, coming in and standing by her sister.

"The same that you wear: my white dress, of course," said Electra.

"But it isn't bleached; and it's a mile too short," said Rebecca, looking patronizingly down on her sister's childish form.

"I'll see to that; if there's time for your frock to bleach, why won't there be time for mine, and don't you suppose I can let my dress down?" said Electra, outwardly defiant, but inwardly regretting she had told the girls she was going, on such slight proof as had been advanced to her.

"But I shall go. I know I shall," thought she. "Benjamin surely thinks of asking me, or he wouldn't have talked so, and said so much about the ball. I wish he had asked me then though, for he may not, and then what shall I do? The girls will tease me to death. But I will go. I won't think there's a possibility of my not going. But I wish I had kept it to myself, for Benjamin didn't ask me, nor say he was going to ask me. But there's no help for it; I'll go on and get ready, and then I may find some means to go; but if I don't get ready I can't go if I do get a chance. I'll take mother's advice, 'Better to be ready, and not go, than to go and not be ready.' I've said so much there's no backing out now. I'll have to go through with the business, seeing I've commenced."

So she brought forth her white frock and proceeded to increase its length, thereby affording considerable amusement to her sister and Hannah Stebbins. But she kept steadily on her way, and soon the frock, now of the desired length, lay on the snow by the side of the others. There was nothing more said about the ball that day, but whenever the frocks were wet, preparatory to spreading them out again, jokes passed between the two girls at the expense of Electra and her frock. On one occasion, when this operation was being performed, Rebecca said:

"What are you going to do for a waist-ribbon? You haven't one fit to wear, especially to your first ball."

"I'll have a ribbon, and won't disgrace you by appearing in a soiled one," said Electra, who had intended to borrow one of her sister, but, after that speech, pride would not permit her. So she went to her mother to see what she would do for her.

"Why, as to the ribbon," said her mother, "that will be easy enough; but you will want a pair of slippers and some spangles. I suppose I could manage them, too; but how are you going?" said her mother.

Electra could not deceive her mother; so she told her about the white spider, her wish to go and all, but made no mention of Benjamin Mosely.

"There will be time enough to do that when he comes," thought she.

"I think your chances of going are very slight," her mother said. "Why, you're only a child. You should wait until you are older before you think of such things, and always be sure you're going before you boast."

"I'm fifteen," said Electra, "and, mother, I do want to go so very, very bad."

"Well, if you can get the articles, and you can find any way of going that is at all proper and right, why then you shall, for Rebecca will be there to take care of you," said her mother.

Electra did not exactly relish the conclusion of this speech, for she disliked her sister's supervision exceedingly. She did not like Rebecca to correct her as if she were a child.

"When I'm fifteen," thought she, in an aggrieved way to herself. "I wish I was a speck taller, and then I would be thought grown-up. But my dress will make some difference, it's the longest I ever wore."

Ashbel and Erastus, the latter the eldest son, now came in. Sitting down by the fire they melted the balls of snow on their heels off on to the clean hearth, laid down their mittens and hats, and created general disorder.

"Ashbel," said his mother, "Electra wants to go to the ball; can't you take her?"

"Why, mother, she's nothing but a little girl yet. But I'd take her and be glad to, only—" Ashbel's face grew redder than was necessary, even if he was sitting close to the blaze, as he went on. "But I've, I've—"

"He's going to take Prudence, and he can't take me," said Electra, much to her brother's relief.

"Of course not if that's the case. I'm afraid, Electra, you will have to spend Thanksgiving evening at home," said her mother.

"Oh, mother!" pouted Electra, the gray eyes dimming their brightness with tears.

"Well, don't make it too hard, if it comes, by thinking so much about it now. Besides, if you had a way of going, I don't exactly see how I'm going to get the ribbon, spangles, slippers and things, and if you don't have all you might just as well not have any," said Mrs. Avery, emphatically.

"Mother," said Erastus, "here is money to buy Electra's finery. I would take her myself, but I cannot bear such things now." The strong voice trembled, and the young man left the kitchen.

A year before Erastus Avery was to have been wedded; but she whom he had loved so long and well laid down the duties of this life to enter upon an untried one in a world which knoweth no change, and he was left to mourn for her and feel that the grave contained the best and the loveliest of women.

Electra was saddened somewhat by her brother's sorrowful manner, and the remembrance of his loss. But she was in too high a state of rejoicing over the unexpected present to be sad for any length of time.

"Now we'll see if I won't have a ribbon that 'll match Bec's and Han's," she said in a triumphant tone.

"Yes," said Ashbel, "but you haven't got the beau to match theirs, and I'm afraid you won't. What 'll you do then?"

"Then I'll have to supplant Han and get David Sherman away from her," said Electra by way of answer.

"Failing that I suppose you will take Nathaniel Brewer," said her brother.

"What, that old chap who thinks me nothing but a baby? I don't think I'd try him. I don't know though what I might not do if rendered desperate; and now, Ashbel Avery, if you hint one word to the girls how I got my adornments I'll go straight to Prudence Sherman and tell her about your getting jealous of Nathaniel Brewer," said Electra.

"Now, Lec, you're too bad, to put a fellow in remembrance of his short-comings in that manner. I won't mention it, but I'd like to know extremely well how you're going," said Ashbel, laughing.

"That's not supposed to interest you so long as Prudence requires your attendance. I shall be there in good season, never fear," said she.

"With such a handsome fellow, I hope that all the girls' hearts will ache; and looking so bewitching yourself, that they will add jealousy to their heartache, and all the boys fall in love with you forthwith," said Ashbel.

Then he gathered up his mittens, hat and ox-whip and went out.

The "finery" was privately purchased by Mrs. Avery. The ribbon and slippers were spangled, and all done so quietly that Rebecca and Hannah concluded that Electra had given up the idea of going. But they found out they were mistaken when one day they came home from a quilting, and discovered her making a red broadcloth pillion.

If you don't know what a pillion is and are desirous of knowing, consult "Webster's Unabridged Dictionary." It will inform you that it is "the pad or cushion attached to the hinder part of a saddle, as a second seat, on which a woman may ride."

In Electra's time carriages were almost unknown. A few aristocrats had heavy, lumbering coaches, and there were a limited number of chaises. But happiness does not depend upon a stylish turnout; and these young ladies and their acquaintances deemed it a pleasure, rather than otherwise, to ride upon a pillion attached to the saddle of a sweetheart. Indeed it was their usual mode of being transported to and from their parties, lyceums, &c., unless in the winter, when there was always snow. Generally there was sleighing Thanksgiving, but the slight snow having melted off, and there being no immediate signs of another fall, Electra had decided to have a pillion in readiness. For she was determined to be entirely ready, even if she did not go.

"Why, Lec, have you still thoughts of making yourself absurd by preparing for the ball, when there's not the least prospect of your going?" said Rebecca.

"Now, don't bother, Becca, I am doing very well; and if I do not succeed in my endeavors, I'll will my pillion to you," said she. "See, is it not handsome, though? Please don't meddle with my pieces, children, I may need them. You shouldn't be so troublesome, Hannie and Becca."

The girls laughed, and the former said:

"The ball is Thursday night, and you will need to hurry if you expect to starch and iron your dress, and spangle your slippers and waist-ribbon in three days. Don't you think so, Bec?"

"I've yet to see the slippers and ribbon Lec possesses to spangle," said Rebecca.

"All in good time, Rebecca, my respected sister. Wait the progress of events, and be not so impatient," said Electra, rising, shaking the ravellings, bits of cloth and thread, etc. from her lap, and then sweeping up the litter she had made. "I call that a pillion worthy of the fairest, even for the august Nathaniel's beloved Rebecca," continued she, dancing out of the room, holding aloft the newly-finished pillion.

The three days slipped swiftly away, and Thanksgiving came with its merry greetings, its fat turkeys, its general good feeling, and the long-anticipated ball. The three frocks had been admirably ironed, Rebecca generously ironing her sister's. They were pronounced miracles of smoothness and whiteness. For a rarity there was no snow, and the pillions were in requisition.

In the afternoon David Sherman and Nathaniel Brewer arrived at Mr. Avery's, where the girls were ready and waiting; and as the party was to be some fifteen miles away, the pillions were attached, and David with Hannah on her pillion behind him, Nathaniel with Rebecca and Ashbel with Prudence rode away, leaving poor Electra alone. The girls, in consideration of her disappointment, had not vexed her about it, and rode off, feeling quite sorry that she was not a little older, so she could go and enjoy herself too.

All things, whether they are tedious or pleasant, come to an end, and so did the ride to the ball, for at last they arrived, and the girls, after exchanging their common shoes and frocks for their spangled slippers and white dresses, were taken to the ball-room by their gentlemen.

After they had been there about an hour a young couple entered, and the lady elicited stares of admiration and queries as to who she was.

"Who is that?" said Hannah Stebbins. "Why, I declare, it's Electra. But who's that with her? Just look Bec, I declare Electra's splendid."

Rebecca turned; surely that black curly head was Electra's, but could that ladylike personage be her little sister? Impossible! but it was.

Yes, it was Electra. After the girls had gone she sat down by the fire and was half inclined to cry, but chancing to look at Erastus, she began to think it was just a little bit wrong for her to feel so bad over a trifle when his loss had been so great and lasting. But she still sat there, feeling mournful and indulging in a genuine fit of the "blues," until her grandmother, a darling old lady, whose especial favorite she was, said:

"Lecky, will you read in the Bible for me? I would like to have you."

"Oh, yes, grandma," said she, bringing the family Bible and sitting down at the old lady's feet. "What shall I read?"

"The one hundred and thirty-first psalm," said grandma.

Electra found the place and read the beautiful exhortation to thanksgiving: "Oh, give thanks unto the Lord, for He is good, for His mercy endureth forever."

Erastus listened. "For His mercy endureth forever." Then the God who had afflicted him was merciful, and he had given Him no thanks. Not even on this day set apart for thanksgiving and praise. No, he had brooded over his troubles; he would do so no more. Electra's voice concluding the psalm, awoke him from his revery. "Oh, give thanks unto the God of Heaven, for his mercy endureth forever."

"What beautiful words those are," said Erastus, the fine eyes, so like his sister's, lighting up with enthusiasm. "What would we do without the Bible, grandma?"

"Why, Erastus, I never thought of such a thing as doing without it," said grandma, laying her soft, plump hand upon Electra's head. She had laid it in her grandma's lap, and thought of how she had been fretting and almost crying about the ball all this Thanksgiving Day. Yes, instead of being thankful for her many mercies, she had murmured at being deprived of a little passing enjoyment. How insignificant and worthless seemed all earthly pleasure when viewed by the light of the Bible. Absorbed in these thoughts, she had forgotten the ball, and did not hear a light tap at the door; but Erastus did, and opened it.

"Is Electra at home?" said a voice, at which she started and smoothed down her curls.

"Yes; walk in," said Erastus, and Benjamin Mosely accordingly did so, bowed to grandma and Electra, and took the chair Erastus offered him.

He was a dark-complexioned, good-looking young man, with a very frank expression, and a pair of merry, black eyes. Altogether he was as nice and as intelligent a young fellow as could well be found.

Grandma gave a sharp look at Electra, and then went conveniently to sleep, and Erastus, seeing something attractive out of the window, went out in great haste to examine it.

"Electra," said Benjamin, "I want to go to the ball, and I'd like to take a little girl named Electra Avery. Do you think she will go?" looking straight at her with his mischievous eyes.

"Yes, I think she will, if you don't call her little girl any more, and if you will ask her mother," said she.

"Those are easy conditions. Is her mother in the kitchen? I'll go and ask her," rising and moving kitchenward.

"Oh, don't! father's in there, and he don't like balls. I'll send mother in," said she, fluttering away.

"Mother," she whispered, "Benjamin Mosely is in the room and wants to see you," glancing furtively at her father reading his paper.

"Who? Not Benjamin Mosely? Not Re—"

"Yes," said Electra. "Oh, mother, do go in quick, I'm afraid father'll hear."

Thus urged, Mrs. Avery went into the other room. Mr. Mosely, his face flaming with the remembrance of former calls he had made, said:

"Mrs. Avery, Electra and I want to go to the ball. May we?"

"I guess so; but you must take good care of her." Benjamin promised, and she went out to inform her daughter of the result of the interview. Electra came in immediately, and grandma woke up.

"Are you going to the ball, dear?" said she, as her grandchild was fastening on her hood.

"Yes, grandma," said the joyous girl.

"Wait a moment," and grandma vanished into her bedroom. After a foray into her chest, she returned with a small wooden box, which she was wrapping in paper, and gave it to Benjamin, saying:

"Put this in your pocket, and give it to Electra when you get there." He did as he was requested. The red broadcloth pillion was fastened to the saddle on Benjamin's fine black horse, and they were soon mounted, and on their way. After they had gone some miles, the young man said—

"Electra, I want you to manage Rebecca so that I can dance with her at least once, for I have something to tell her."

Electra's spirits had been away up in the clouds, they now sank down to the earth. "It was Rebecca's society he wanted, after all," thought she. "But what do I care? I don't want him; I'm glad there's a chance of sister's being happy after all the trouble she has had." But she said—

"Of course, I will. That is, if I get a chance to dance with Nathaniel."

"You'll have plenty of dances, don't you fear. I'm only afraid you will wear your feet out, and then you'd be in a pretty condition. Nathaniel wouldn't look at you, afterward," said Mosely.

Thus merrily he talked, but his heart was heavy. He had been engaged to Rebecca Avery, but there had been a quarrel, and they had been parted. Rebecca accepted the attentions of Nathaniel Brewer; a pleasant, agreeable, brown-haired young man of twenty-four, and Benjamin had gone with all the girls, but fell in love with none. He had thought he would not attend the ball, when he heard that Nathaniel was to take Rebecca. But meeting Electra at the Lyceum, and seeing the wish in her eyes, he formed a plan that he would come, after the others had gone, and take her. By her help he hoped to get an opportunity of talking with Rebecca; and, perhaps, they could make up that miserable quarrel. But he was not sure, and as he loved sincerely, he was troubled.

They reached their destination rather late. Electra's nicely wrapped up dress, which Benjamin had carried, was delivered to her. Her slippers and ribbon taken from his saddle-bags, and then she said—

"Oh, the box, grandma gave you to carry for me." That was immediately forthcoming, and, after being shown to the dressing-room, she proceeded to make her toilet.

She waved the front of her hair, and fastened it far back. Then her snowy dress, her flashing slippers and ribbon, were donned, and then the almost forgotten box was opened. What a cry of delighted surprise she gave. Then as she lifted her grandmother's gold beads from their cotton nest, and caught sight of a paper on which was written in a crabbed hand, "For my beloved grandchild, Electra," she murmured, "Dear grandma, how kind, how thoughtful she is! The shining globes were quickly placed around the white neck, and then with a pride we would all have felt, had we been in her position, she surveyed herself in the glass. "Who would have thought I should have looked so nice?" she said.

"Well!" she was perfect. Her lengthened frock made her appear a few inches taller than she really was, and fitted so neatly to her slender, graceful figure that it caused her to seem almost sylph-like. Her hair, showering its long loose curls over her plump shoulders; her noble face with its clear complexion, radiant eyes, faintly-tinged cheeks, and above all, its expression of purity, made a picture fair to look upon. While the golden beads and spangles served but to enhance the beauty of the wearer.

What wonder, that Mosely gazed in bewilderment. What wonder, that her appearance in the ball-room was the source of admiring comment. What wonder, that Rebecca could hardly determine her identity with her romping little sister. What wonder, that Ashbel opened his eyes, and felt very proud of her. What wonder, after she had danced the first set with Benjamin, that Brewer, her old fogy, requested the honor of her hand for the second.

Rebecca watched with jealous interest and a feeling of suffocation. She had seen that Mosely, her old lover, was Electra's companion; and she doubted not, that he was lost to her forever. What would she not have given, to have been assured that his heart was hers? Oh, that quarrel, would that it never had been. Was her sister to rob her of Mosely's love, and then deprive her of Nathaniel's attentions?

Do not think she envied that dear young sister her beauty; oh, no, she gloried in it, and did not dream that a pair of manly eyes were following her movements with loving admiration.

When the dance was concluded, Electra, Nathaniel and Benjamin came where she was, and sitting down they chanced (?) to throw the old lovers side by side.

"Good evening Mr. Mosely!" "Good evening Miss Avery," was as coldly spoken as if [each heart was not throbbing with longing.

Brewer and Electra chatted away in great glee. She forgot that he was a fogy, and thought that he was the best and grandest of men. He forgot that he had always considered her a child, and began secretly to wish that he had never gone with Rebecca. For how could he jilt her for her sister. He could not do it. Ah! he did not know that the remedy, for all this, was sitting by Miss Avery's side.

Quite a long while they sat thus—then, just as the musicians began to "tune up," Electra, whose curls had become unaccountably disarranged, requested her sister to come away to the dressing-room, and arrange them.

Rebecca did so—and Electra said,

"Becca, Benjamin wants to dance with you; and he wants to talk with you. If you love him, act naturally; for I believe he wishes to make it all up."

Rebecca did not reply. But when she had fastened back the last rich curl, she kissed the crimson lips of the little peace-maker, and a warm tear fell upon the innocent face.

Well, the long-separated lovers danced together, and had a talk afterward. While Electra enjoyed herself amazingly, made more than one heart feel bitter, Hannah Stebbins actually jealous, and was declared the belle of the occasion.

Then, just as the cold sun was rising, they reached the Avery farm-house, and that was the end of the ball.

But a little over a year and a half after that, when June's roses were blooming, and all Nature was rejoicing in the pride of summer beauty, there was a double wedding at Mr. Avery's; and after that people had a fashion of calling Rebecca Mrs. Mosely, and Electra Mrs. Brewer.

☞ The Cincinnati Commercial prints this "ballad by a clerk who parts his hair in the middle:"

She stood beside the counter
The day I'll never forget
She thought the Muslin Deaner
Than any she'd seen yet
I watched her playful fingers
the Silk & Satin toss
the clerk looked quite uneasy
and nodded at the Boss.

Show me some velvet ribbon
Berage & Satin dark
She said I want to purchase
Then gave the goods a jerk
The clerk was all obedience
He Travelled on his shape
At Length with Hesitation
She bought a yard of Tape.

NEW PUBLICATIONS.

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HOMŒOPATHY, THE SCIENCE OF THERAPEUTICS—ITS NATURAL LAW AND THE ESSENTIAL CONDITIONS OF THAT LAW.—Such is the title of the annual address before the Homœopathic Medical Society of Pennsylvania, recently delivered at Harrisburg by Dr. Thomas Moore of Germantown. It is an able and well written presentation of the peculiar doctrine of Hahnemann, which Dr. Moore contends elevates medicine to the dignity of a science. The following extract shows how homœopathy originated:—

"This law was discovered by Samuel Hahnemann, in the year 1790, while engaged in translating the article on Peruvian bark, in *Cullen's Materia Medica*. Hahnemann was not satisfied with the explanation there given of the curative powers of Peruvian bark; and he conceived the idea that by testing this drug upon himself while in a healthy condition, he might, perhaps, ascertain the true cause of its remedial action. By thus interrogating Nature, he found that this drug produced upon him symptoms similar to those cases of intermittent fever which had been cured by it; and the thought flashed upon his mind that the disease-producing power of drugs upon the healthy, would give the key to their curative action upon the sick.

"He at once searched the records of medicine to learn whether other drugs had produced in the healthy symptoms similar to those they were known to have cured. But unfortunately those records were very defective, because drugs had never before been systematically proved upon the healthy.

"He then instituted careful experiments upon himself and others, with the view of ascertaining the disease-producing power of other drugs; and afterward, from observing the successful curative action of these upon the sick, he became convinced that what was true in regard to Peruvian bark was also true of all other drugs, and, 'that all medicines cure the diseases whose symptoms approach nearest to their own.'

"Thus, by the power of inductive reasoning, based upon well-ascertained facts obtained by careful experiment and well-verified observation, he discovered the law of nature which governs the power of drugs to cure disease. A discovery of as great importance to medicine as was Newton's law of universal gravitation to astronomy and general physical science.

"After Hahnemann had made this great discovery, and before he gave it to the world, he was for several years engaged in testing its truth upon his patients. What delight he must have felt in these first responses of nature to his anticipations!

"He then announced the law under the formula, *Similia similibus curantur*."

In regard to the infinitesimal dose, Dr. Moore claims that however impossible it may be to explain the reason, it is a *fact* that the *curative energy of medicine* is developed by the attenuation of the drug. And he asserts that the new discovery in science by which heat, light, electricity, sound, &c., are demonstrated to be merely different "modes of motion" of the infinitely small molecules of which matter is composed, is in reasonable accord with the doctrine of infinitesimal doses. And that as it does not require the transmission of matter to communicate light, heat and magnetism, so a curative agent which is merely an imponderable force, may produce its highest effect as a mode of motion, in rectifying disease (which probably also is merely an irregular mode of motion) when untrammelled by the transmission of any appreciable matter. We refer the reader however to the address itself, for a fuller statement of Dr. Moore's views.

POTTER'S COMPLETE BIBLE ENCYCLOPEDIA. Edited by Rev. WM. BLACKWOOD, D. D., L.L. D., author of "Blackwood's Comprehensive Aids to the Study of the Holy Bible," etc. With Valuable Contributions by other Eminent Divines. With nearly 3000 Fine Illustrative Engravings by the Best Artists. Published by John E. Potter & Co. Philada. This beautiful Encyclopædia will be issued in semi-monthly parts, at fifty cents each. The work includes everything usually found in a complete Bible Dictionary, and also embraces all the available information in the entire range of Biblical, Ecclesiastical and General Religious Literature, from the earliest times to the present day. This vast fund of knowledge has been gathered from thousands of publications, the writings of Eminent Divines and Distinguished Scholars in all lands and ages of the world.

PHILIP EARNCLIFFE; OR, THE MORALS OF MAY FAIR. A Novel. By MRS. ANNIE EDWARDS, author of "Ought We to Visit Her?" "Archie Lovell, etc. Published by Sheldon & Co., New York; and also for sale by Claxton, Remsen & Haffelfinger, Philada. Price in Cloth, $1.75; Paper, $1.00.

AN OPEN QUESTION. A Novel. By JAMES DE MILLE, author of "The Lady of the Ice," etc. With Illustrations by ALFRED FREDERICKS. Published by D. Appleton & Co., New York; and also for sale by Claxton, Remsen & Haffelfinger, Phila. Price $1.00.

GEO. P. ROWELL & CO.'s GAZETTEER, containing a Statement of the Industries, Characteristics, Population and Location of all Towns in the United States and British America in which Newspapers are published. Published by Geo. P. Rowell & Co., No. 41 Park Row, New York.

LEWIS ARUNDEL. By FRANK E. SHERDLEY. Published by T. B. Peterson & Bros., Phila. Price $1.00.

LIPPINCOTT'S MAGAZINE for March contains "The Roumi in Kabylia," (Illustrated), "The National Trans-Alleghany Water-Way," "A Princess of Thule," "Winter," "New Washington," "Unsettled Points of Etiquette," "Chateaubriand's Ducks," and other good articles. Published by J. B. Lippincott & Co., Philada.

THE GALAXY for March contains "The Wetherel Affair," "Casual Cogitations," "Life on the Plains," "Views Abroad—French Living," "Recollections of Horace Greeley," "Implora Pace," "Women as Inconstants," etc., etc. Published by Sheldon & Co., New York.

THE BRITISH QUARTERLY REVIEW for January. American Edition. Among other good matter this contains "The Iron-clad Reconstruction of the Navy," "The Emperor Alexander and the Policy of Russia," "A Contribution Toward a Theory of Poetry," "Local Taxation." Published by the Leonard Scott Publishing Co., New York; and also for sale by W. B. Zieber, Philada.

ZELL'S MONTHLY MAGAZINE for February contains "Sketches of Dutch Life and Manners," "The Black Watch," "Future Changes of the Earth," etc. Published by T. Ellwood Zell, Philadelphia.

☞ The Boston Traveller mourns the loss of a cat that has been a regular attache of the paper since 1861.

☞ An exchange informs us of a benevolent gentleman who gives twenty-five cents for religious purposes every time he swears. He has already d—d a new steeple on a Presbyterian church, and is now engaged in "cussing up" a donation to the Home Missionary Society.

☞ If you don't want to disgust everybody with your offensive breath, cure your Catarrh, upon which it depends. $500 reward is offered by the proprietor of Dr. Sage's Catarrh Remedy for a case of Catarrh which he cannot cure. It is sold by Druggists. 611.

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By Mrs. HENRY WOOD, author of "East Lynne," "Lady Adelaide's Trial," etc.

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By DAISY VENTNOR, author of "Queen Coquetta," etc.

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☞ When Shakespeare wrote about patience on a monument, he did not refer to doctors' patients, because you always find them under a monument.

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THE
SATURDAY EVENING POST.

PHILADELPHIA, SATURDAY, MARCH 1, 1873.

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LETTERS FROM ZIG.

A PROCRUSTEAN BEDSTEAD.

WRITTEN FOR THE SATURDAY EVENING POST.

It is a misfortune of mine to often lose my temper. Sometimes I lose it o' purpose,—fly into a passion from a sense of duty. Once in about so long, I go off into a state of wrath on general principles. But I haven't been so indignant, so enraged to the very marrow of my bones, in two years' time, as I was last week. At the last meeting but one of the Board of Education in this place, one of the members, an old gentleman to whom age brings only fogyism instead of wisdom, offered a resolution to establish a separate High School for girls, where they should no longer be taught Latin, geometry, and that trash, but the "practical duties of life," forsooth! and stocking darning and cooking.

And very wise of him it was too, you will say, will you? I want to know if you will dare to say that you think it was very wise of him? I'd like to have anybody tell me that right out, once! The way I'd step out of my "spear" and give that person a woman's rights lecture, would make him wish his mother had been a man instead of a woman.

Ever since the world began, his lordship, man, by virtue of having the strongest arm, has had things most all his own way in this life. Poor woman, weighted down by her physical nature, never has been able to take her own part. She never will be, until man helps her. We have a hope that when man becomes civilized, he will help her, and let her help him. Now, however, whenever a man thinks of woman and her needs and wants, his mind is chiefly occupied in thinking how to govern her. Times without number I've wondered in my life whether God ever gave a special dispensation to the masculine gender to make all the laws regulating the feminine gender, whether the masculine gender has sure enough a God-given right to say that the hard-won earnings of a married woman shall every cent go into her husband's pocket. Over and over again it has been a hopeless conundrum to my stupid wits why a widow oughtn't to have unconditionally and independently a foot of land, nor a dollar of money, nor an inch of house-room of her own earnings during the course of a long and worthy married life. Widows' thirds, forsooth! Poor, pitiful, despicable, mean-spirited swindle of the helpless! I knew a hard-working, skilful married lady who accumulated a large property with the earnings of her own hands, and at his death her good-for-nothing dog of a husband willed every penny of it to his own relations, whom the poor lady had always particularly disliked during her lifetime. There's civilization for you, and justice, and that chivalrous protection of woman at the hands of man, which the stupid, selfish old fogies ding into our ears so unceasingly. There's chivalry for you! If I were bright, or quick, or shrewd, doubtless I could see through it all, and understand at once that the laws are exactly right and proper as men have made 'em.

But not being either bright or shrewd or quick, I say I've put down my head for hours, and helplessly wondered why man should govern woman like a child or an idiot, any more than women should govern man; I fail to see any eternal justice, eternal fitness, or eternal sense in it either. That's because I'm stupid, you know. And I can't tell for my life again, why either sex should govern the other at all, or what sense or decency there is in either sex's having the other under its thumb, and saying what it shall do and sha'n't do, where it shall or sha'n't go, and what's proper for it, and what isn't. But then I'm not brilliant, you know. Once more too my confused wits have been in a muddle of wonder, and this time I've wondered, if women had helped make the laws which they are compelled to obey, or if they had had anything to say about it at all, whether they would have made the laws exactly as they are; whether, in short, they would have voted all the money and all the governing power away from themselves and into the hands of men. I'm not pondering a pitiful question of expediency or anything of that sort, now, you see, I'm pondering a question of eternal justice.

It is easy enough for a thoughtful person to see how this state of things came about. Man is physically the stronger, and physical force alone governed the world in all the early ages. "God is on the side of the best battalions," said that despot, Napoleon Bonaparte. And men, from being the stronger, have had things their own way since the beginning of time. Woman is what men have made her—and they have made her what they liked, because they had the power. They have pinched her in here, and trimmed her down there, and have said exactly how far her intellect should be cultivated, or else that it shouldn't be cultivated at all, just as it pleased them.

And now, the strangest part of it all is, that they are not satisfied with their own work. The most contemptible epithet you can apply to a man, the world over, is to call him a woman. What says the prayer of the Mohammedan? "Oh, Lord, I thank Thee that I was not born a woman!" And that is an echo, right out plain, of the sentiment that inspires every masculine breast, civilized and savage, the world over. It's the queerest thing in nature why they should have such a contempt for the work of their own hands. When they've been tinkering at the woman question for six thousand years, too.

In view of their miserable failure, a reasonable person would naturally suppose that after an unsuccessful attempt of six thousand years, man would at last be willing to give it up, and let women take the woman question into their own hands. But they are not. Goodness gracious, no! The most stupid, ignorant donkey of a man on the globe, considers himself fully competent to thrust his dirty finger into the woman pie, and unalterably prescribe "woman's sphere." And the more ignorant and stupid donkey of a man he is, the more competent he thinks himself. I've always noticed that. The most decided opinions on the woman question I ever heard, were from the ignorant, brutal, lately-emancipated negroes of the South.

No; men can't mind their own business, and let women work out their own destiny for themselves. Women can't be admitted to the highest places of learning and liberal culture, knock she over so loudly. Men won't let her. She can't even go to a city high school on equal terms with her brother, without having some confounded old mummy after her, piping on his little old cracked tin horn about the "needs of her being," and the "practical duties of life." I tell you it just makes me boil over with rage. I feel as though I'd like to choke the breath out of the old mummy, if indeed an old mummy had any breath in him, or a single drop of warm, bright blood, or anything else that is warm, generous, or human.

If a woman is too long for the Procrustean bedstead these galvanized mummies have built for her, she must be cut off to fit it. If too short for the "practical duties" they have laid down for her, they apply hooks to her flesh and stretch her out, heedless of the agony it cost her. Even in childhood they begin to fit her to the iron bedstead. If a little girl is active, strong-limbed, and fond of out-door exercise, she is assailed at once with the cry of "tom-boy," and commanded not to do whatever she most likes to do, because it isn't nice for girls. She is taught to screech at a spider, and faint at a rat. Don't tell me it's natural for a girl to be a cowardly fool. It's no such thing. A little later, if she is poor and has her own bread to win, there is almost an unanimous conspiracy on the part of men, by means of ridicule and threats even, to shut her out of all the money-earning trades and professions. The doors of law schools, of theological schools, of medical schools, of nearly all establishments of learning of the highest class, and even of colleges supported by the State, are slammed in her face, and she is left to pick up such scraps of living and learning as she can, and driven back, if possible, to cooking and darning, and the "needs of her being." What if there was an unwritten law of society and of custom compelling every man to do nothing but saw wood?

It's wrong and it's mean.

Then, after doing their best to pin woman down to cooking and nursing till doomsday, whether she has anything to cook or nurse or not, the galvanized mummies complain that women gad from house to house and gossip. Do you know why women gad and gossip, and have such large noses for small news? It is a woman's way of finding excitement, her only relief from the horribly dull, narrow, and stupid round of domestic life. Women take no more kindly to this contemptible prison round than men do, and I know it. Every woman knows it. Men find excitement and variety in their busy, out-door life. Women must also find variety and excitement somehow, if not in one way, then in another, and if there is no other way, even in shallow, evil gossip. "If men's lives are not domestic, women's will not be."

Understand me, I am not rebelling against fate. I know full well that it will be the destiny of at least half the women in the world to keep bright the eternal altar-fire of home, and I rejoice at it. It is no mean destiny. But to make a home the temple of love, beauty, purity, and knowledge that it ought to be, a woman needs the very highest, broadest, truest culture earth can give. To make herself what she ought to be, to make her home what it ought to be, to make her children what they ought to be, she asks and needs that culture. And there is just as much sense in a proposition for a school to teach boys to split kindling, as to teach girls "the practical duties of life." "The excellent woman is she who, if the husband dies, can be a father to the children," says Goethe. How can a girl become the "excellent woman" if she is tied down to cooking and darning? Woman needs all the learning she can get, and more too. For Heaven's sake let her have it. Let her be a free person in a free republic. Let her learn what she likes, and follow what pursuits she likes. Don't tell her this, that, and the other isn't nice for women to do; because it's none of your business what a woman does, as long as she obeys the laws.

For God's sake stop trimming women down!

ZIG.

[NOTE BY THE EDITOR.—We suppose that there is no need of informing our readers at this late day, that the correspondents of THE POST, and our friend Zig particularly, often say things that we do not endorse. And we let them say them for two reasons: 1. Because no person can write well if continually hampered and interfered with; and, 2. Because, as Jefferson said, "Error of opinion may be freely tolerated, if reason is left free to combat it." As to Zig's article this week, we think she is, as usual upon the woman question, just about half *right*. Taking a broad view of the law, we do not think it so entirely unjust to woman; and when alterations in favor of woman have recently been asked of our law-makers, they have generally been granted. In fact the law in many of our States is now unfairly partial to womankind. For instance, married women have been given the right to hold property in their own name, the same as the husband in his. And yet the husband can be held accountable for the wife's debts; while the wife, however wealthy, cannot be held accountable for the husband's. So also the husband can be compelled (and it is done every day) to support the wife, while the wife (however wealthy) cannot be compelled to support her husband, even if the latter be poor and bed-ridden.

As to physical force ruling the world, it never (in our opinion) has ruled the world, even among the most barbarous peoples. The Priest has always governed by intellect, and the Chieftain generally has done so.

As to physical inferiority, Zig might see that it is just as fatal to the natural equality of the sexes to grant that, as to grant mental inferiority. If you break the circle of equality, it matters little at what link.

We agree with Zig as to allowing woman full leave to employ her faculties in her own way. And at the same time we agree with the old gentleman that there is a great deal of foolish teaching of the higher branches of knowledge both to girls and boys, who would be much better employed in learning useful trades on the one side, and how to sew, cook, bake, &c., on the other. Schooling based upon the ridiculous doctrine of the natural equality of brains, is often worse than useless—either for girls or boys. To be good housekeepers is about as much as the great mass of women are fit for—as to make a living in the various trades and industrial occupations is a high enough grasp for the greater part of men. Better make a good carpenter out of a man than a poor doctor, lawyer or minister. As to cookery, it is almost the one great want of this American world. Bad cookery, in our honest opinion, has more to do with the general ill health of our people, and the intemperate use of ardent spirits, than any other cause. And until the women of America learn how to cook, and such knowledge is thought highly of, instead of being sytematically decried as low and mean, all the laws that can be made against intemperance will amount to nothing; and multitudes of our people will be continually dyspeptic and ailing. We think Zig is perfectly right in what she says about culture, but for the mass of men and women the first and most important thing is to know how to make a living in some useful occupation—and a waste of time in the attempt to master the higher branches of learning will hinder more than help the great majority of both sexes in that respect.]

SHE SLEEPS 'NEATH THE DAISIES.

WRITTEN FOR THE SATURDAY EVENING POST,
BY BELLE BREMER.

She sleeps 'neath the daisies; the summer wind sighing,
That ripples the long grass above her bright head,
Seems the sad cadences wailing and dying
Of requiems chanted above the loved dead.

The sun has gone down, and the shepherds returning
At nightfall are calling their flocks from the lea;
The jewels in the belt of Orion are burning
Like glittering sands from some orient sea.

The voice of the night wind dying and fainting
Is low, weird music among the deep pines,
Is all that is heard, save the whippoorwill's plaining
To his mate in his nest in the dark clinging vines.

My tears like a rain with the night-dews are falling,
I sit 'neath the willow that bends o'er her tomb,
And naught is returned to my passionate calling
But the chirp of a katydid out of the gloom.

Oh, gentle and sweet as the wild flowers blowing,
Of all earth's angels the fairest and best,
Pure as the dew-drop, or tears that are flowing,
And fair as the lily that blooms on her breast!

For a heart that is broken, for dreams that are perished,
No life-giving power, no healing is found;
The light of my life and the hope that I cherished,
All, all are here in this little green mound.

LETTER FROM NEW YORK.

WRITTEN FOR THE SATURDAY EVENING POST,
BY OLIVE KING.

DEAR POST:—Beg pardon! but I don't want to say a word about fashions this week, please.

I would like to talk about them well enough, if Madame Modiste would only furnish material.

A philosopher said in my presence the other evening, that where there was a demand there was always a supply. I thought of fashion reporting, and had my doubts about the truth of the statement.

I suppose I have been in every shop—excuse me!—*emporium*, where styles are dispensed, in this city within the last week; and if my future happiness depended upon it, I couldn't jot down one single new idea that I have gleaned. I went through infants' wardrobes, turned the little Normandy caps around and looked at them before and behind; I gazed intently at the embroidery in satin stitch that ornamented the little Cashmere shoes, I shook out the Christening robe with its Valenciennes lace and bows of pink *faille* up the front, I criticised the French aprons and bibs, and all the other items of dress incident to babyhood. I analyzed the party outfits for misses from three to twelve, admired the Scotch suits for the boys, dissected bridal *trousseaus*, and examined the quiet dresses designed for the grandmothers and great-grandmothers, who, notwithstanding their silvered hair and faded bloom, have still a lingering pride in being fashionable. Amid it all, not the shadowy ghost of a new idea could I discover. Baby-clothes are made in the old way, which we are assured is always the best: children's party dresses are duplicates of mamma's, and mamma's are just as they have been for the last year.

Over-skirts are not as plenty as they were and probably will disappear entirely before another season. There is nothing certain about it though, they may take a new lease of life and burst forth with something more than their accustomed effulgence; we may have them in a *more* aggravated form for all we know. At present they seem to be dying out. Skirts ruffled to the waist are the popular idea, and, in conjunction with it, I see a new toilet smoothing iron advertised, which, it appears, can be heated at a gas jet in a minute or less, and is just the thing so far as these ruffles are concerned; everybody who has ever had an attack of them being fully aware that it is necessary to iron them out every time you wear them, and considerably oftener if you care how you look.

The little basques that are always an accompaniment to these skirts look very pretty on slight, girlish figures, but are not so becoming to those approaching *embonpoint*. But we can't reduce ourselves to suit the fashion very well. We might undertake it, but unless we contracted a fever, or got a cholera or consumption, we should doubtless find it a slow, tedious undertaking. I've heard of banting—but I confess I don't just know what it is. Perhaps it ought to be spelled with a capital B, I'm sure I can't tell. All I know about it is that it is a system by which the size and fatness of people are reduced. I saw an earnest disciple of the—*system* (that's what they call it.) She had been practising it two years with satisfactory results. She had lessened herself a great deal, she said. I don't think she weighed an ounce over three hundred pounds when I saw her. I don't think either that she would have looked well in a basque close-fitting and pointed back and front. But she did look well in the neatly, but not superfluously, trimmed polonaise that she wore. I heard many remark that for such a stout lady she was an elegant figure. I figured the thing up, and by careful computation I found that *dress* did it. She was not an elegant figure, but she had good taste and studied how to appear at her best, and got her lesson well. She was a jolly creature, (fat people always are jolly creatures,) and when a pale, emaciated little woman good-naturedly and politely remarked that her husband thought *stout* ladies were splendid, she looked up honestly and said, "So does mine—but Good Gracious!"

I didn't know what she meant by Good Gracious! but her involuntary laugh seemed to indicate that there might be "too much of a good thing."

So far as the polonaise is concerned it looks now as though it was one of the permanent institutions of the country. Thinking about it, one can hardly tell whether to be glad or sorry. They look well when stylishly made of pretty material, but when Bridget or Judith comes into the kitchen with a nondescript on, that was intended to be "just like the one the mistress wears," you can't somehow feel that confidence in your correct taste that you would like to feel. One can't have an overweening admiration for what one sees all the time—we would tire of our husbands, I'm afraid, if they didn't go to business every day—and when a thing grows common as the polonaise has done, we may accept it as a fixed fact, just as gentlemen have their coats, but to wax enthusiastic over one would be a simple impossibility. In my own heart I think they are the most convenient garments ever presented, and to the unknown inventor of them I feel a deep, sincere and lasting gratitude; but except I'm in a hurry—in danger of losing the train—or am late about getting ready for the theatre, I don't think I care about wearing any more polonaise. In a word I'm awfully tired of them.

The little chains of gilt and oxidized silver that young ladies suspend from the belt are growing in favor every day—or *night*, I might more properly say, this being the carnival season.

Very handy they are, as they can be made to secure the fan, the vinaigrette and the handkerchief, all necessary articles, and ever present with fashion's votaries. If they could be made to secure the powder that ladies will persist in sprinkling upon their hair, they would be still more useful, and doubtless would receive favorable mention from the gentlemen, who after one "Boston" or a "Redowa" are obliged to retire to brush from their unoffending shoulders the drifts of diamond, blonde and lily white powder.

We are none of us particularly amiable if by any accident our *preux chevalier* steps upon our dainty silks; but who ever heard a grumble, or saw a dissatisfied look upon a gentleman's face as the angel at his side shook her pretty head and scattering the blonde powder over the fine dress coat, ruined its fresh appearance forever?

By the way, and I came near forgetting it, an item of interest has been created by the announcement of an old-fashioned entertainment. It is called "A pop-corn and kissing party." All style is set aside, and calico dresses and bib aprons are, for the time, to reign supreme. A colored fiddler (blind if possible) is to furnish the music, and no dance more modern than "Money Musk" or the "Virginia Reel" can be participated in. All the old games, such as "Hunt the Slipper," "Blindman's Buff," "Button Button" and "Twirl the Trencher" are to be looked up and revived, while the refreshments are to consist of doughnuts, mince-pies, cider and such other indigestibles as are known as "good old-fashioned fare."

But "to return to our mutton," I am informed that those large humpy bunched-up tournures are not fashionable any more. I should never have known it if some one had not told me, for to save me, I can't see any difference in the ones the fashionables wear now, and the ones they wore three months and six months ago. My informant says they should be flat on the hips and made long, that the dress may trail off gracefully to the ground, and that the sash should outline the tournure and be tied below it. There are a great many things in this world that *should* be but which, I am sorry to say, are not.

But of one thing we may be certain, muslin pleatings and garniture upon silk, and muslin over-skirts are going out of date—are even now considered *passe*. No one is sorry for this, as it was never a tasteful fashion, though one rather troublesome and expensive.

Now having convinced you that there is absolutely nothing in fashions to talk about, we will proceed to be reasonable, and take up some of the stirring events of the day and comment upon them, and exchange ideas, and "swap jokes" as the late lamented Lincoln would express it. Perhaps we would enjoy talking over noted personages? Suppose we commence with George Francis Train. Now in my opinion—Bless my soul! I'm clear to the end of my column.

HOME AND SOCIETY.

Home Decorations.

WRITTEN FOR THE SATURDAY EVENING POST.

Every mother should strive to make her home attractive.

"Certainly!" exclaims Mrs. Albright; "that is an aphorism well understood, and those that possess money can doubtless make it so, for elegant carpets, curtains, mirrors, furniture, etc., will always produce a fine effect; but with a common carpet and curtains, and plain furniture, it is not so easily done."

Ah! friend, do you think so? Now I believe that the lack of elegant carpets, mirrors, etc., can be made up in sunshine, flowers, neatness, simplicity, and a little exercise of ingenuity. Some of the most cosey, tasteful and comfortable homes I have ever seen have been those where money was a scarce article, but where loving fingers and patient will had executed many ornamental devices.

I once saw as handsome an *escritoire*, work-basket on a stand, a centre-table with a top that swung round and disclosed a drawer, and a table with a chess-board let in on top, which could be removed and disclose a backgammon-board, with carved men; and all of them were made of oiled black-walnut, elaborately carved, and were the workmanship of the master of the house, who was a hardware merchant; but possessing a taste for the craft of cabinet-making, and finding that a piano manufactory was located in the rooms above his store, availed himself of the tools used there, and in his leisure hours produced these really elegant articles of furniture, which adorned and beautified his cottage home.

The articles were made in the hours that most men devote to smoking, card-playing, etc.; and not only men but boys could add greatly to the decoration of home, if they would but follow his example.

Perhaps they do not possess his gifts and could not execute such elaborate carvings, but almost every boy can make black walnut or cedar brackets, wall-pockets, and book-rests, that will be very ornamental as well as useful.

Then our girls can make brackets and wall-pockets out of stiff pasteboard enlivened with "spatter work," or covered with gay pieces of silk or thibet; and even lacking all these materials, they can be made out of cast-away box covers, and covered with the feathery mosses, gray lichens and sealing-wax mosses of the pine-woods, which are free to every one who will gather them. We should encourage our children in their search for "THE BEAUTIFUL;" and not call the various work in which they delight, "*so much litter*."

It is not misspent time to wander in the woods and gather evergreens, mosses, and bright berries wherewith to adorn our sitting-rooms; and it also does them good to wander amid the old cathedral pine-woods, with their many columns and dark-green roof, interlaced so thickly with branches that one can hardly discern the blue sky above them.

It fills their hearts with nobler aspirations and tender thoughts to hold commune with the "*green things of the earth*." It makes their bodies stronger and their souls purer, and fits them to battle with the cares of life. So let them gather up the autumn leaves, press, varnish, and arrange them in clusters over the doors, and above, around and under the pictures and engravings, and also mosses, ferns, etc.

The leaves are free to all; they can be had without money and without price, and they produce a most charming effect when well-prepared, and mingled with green ferns, and trailing evergreens.

As I write, my room is brightened by their assistance; and when eyes ache and thoughts lag, I have but to gaze upon the walls to obtain rest and inspiration. They rest my nerves, quiet my pulses, and are "a beauty and a joy forever."

Would you ask their cost? Simply the time spent in gathering and pressing them; and no one enters my parlor without exclaiming "how lovely!"

To be sure an open, hard-wood fire lightens up the effect, and sheds its effulgence into every corner of the room, but the simple decoration of autumn leaves, ferns and evergreens exceeds the costly magnificence of velvet and lace hangings, and tapestried upholstery. Now look at my mosses on this little table in the corner. No rare, *rococo bijouterie* could excel them in loveliness, and all beholders declare that it is a most tasteful, rustic arrangement. I had a zinc pan two feet and a half in length, and two feet wide, and five inches deep made at the tinman's and painted a dark green, and then I filled it up with bits of handsome quartz rock, leaf mould and a little sand, and good soil, and piled them up into a pyramidal shape. Over the whole I planted smilax, moneywort and *Mitchella repens* with its bright scarlet berries; in all the interstices are bright-hued mosses, and the apex is crowned with a small double white primrose in the fullest of bloom. No glass covers my winter garden, but daily I sprinkle it by dipping a small handbrush into warm water and shaking it over the pan, and every plant grows luxuriantly. Now will you tell me that only the rich can decorate their homes with beauty and elegance? Try these simple home decorations, fair friends, and see for yourselves how charming they are.

DAISY EYEBRIGHT.

WRITE HOME.

There is a world of tender feeling and wholesome advice in this little essay from the "Etc." department of the Overland Monthly. It is written as in memory of Christmas, but its precepts will keep green all the year round:—

Write home; write home. The Christmas time for tender memories, and meltings of the soul. The New Year's prime for freshened purposes. Seasons blending well, and blending now for us. Write home!

In many a household, two articles are apt to be laid on the shelf—the family Bible and the inkstand. If the former be sprinkled with corner dust, the latter curdles its sediments in its fluid moldiness; holding the stab of a pen in soak to uselessness, so that should one use it, it would make a thick, black, muddy down-stroke—and nothing else. Others of us there are who keep the inkstand open all the time; and it is dip, dip, scratch and scramble—producing much waste paper in the world—good writing, which, in after years, shall make poor kindling. So much that we write is altogether so mechanical, superficial, formal.

But write home. Write the expected letters. Better a little oftener, and a little earlier, than in mere surrender to the demands of expectation. Nevertheless, sometimes the expected letter acquires new charms in its few hours of tardiness, like a small sum of interest paid with the principal. Let it not run too long, however. let it never be too late. There are letters arriving for the hands that are folded on the breast—the letters lie upon the mantel, while the coffin lies upon the trestles; and it is an awkward thing for colder hands to open them. Write home!

"Has nothing come in the mail for us, Bridget?" "No, nothing to-night, mum." "Sarah Jane, did no letter come?" (hoping that Sarah Jane may have gone to the post-office and secured the same, without Bridget's knowledge.) "No, mother, nothing for us to-night." "Poor John! I suppose he can hardly get time. I hope nothing has happened to John." The dear old mother, disciplined through life, makes no complaint. The rheumatic hands only stir the fire a little more impatiently. The rheumatic limbs only cower a little closer over it. A shadow on the gray hair, and a slight absence of mind in household care. "I know John is dreadful busy; God preserve him." But stop—"I forgot to tell yees, mum, there kem a letther for yees. Meather Jones, the nsebor, fetched it till yees, and he cum airly. I was afeard the childer would be afther playin' wid it, and I put it behint the picter in the parlor; and what wid the scrampagin' round and round, it went clane out of my mind. Shall I be afther gettin' it for yees?" "Oh! Bridget!" is all the answer. The tone says all. Write the expected letters.

Write the unexpected letters. It is nice to be reminded of people, and to know that people remember you, upon whose memory you have no claim.

There is a group in the rustic New England store, standing round the stove. It is a dreary day; and some hearts are very dreary. They have outgrown their own pith, and outlasted their own hopes. Others are heedless and hard, because parched. The consequential postmaster—sometimes talkative, sometimes surly, always dignified—puts on his steel spectacles, with a relish. He fumbles among the documents. He scans the bundles of exchanges—lots of *weekly* newspapers. "Jenks," he says, "it seems to me that there is a letter come for you. Your name is Jenkins Jenks, aint it?" looking at the seedy individual searchingly—not through the spectacles, but over them, that he may not claim any Jenks but the right Jenks. "Yes," he says, dubiously, "I believe that is my name; but there must be some mistake. There aint no letter comin' to me. Aint nobody writes to *me*. What would anybody write to *me* for?"—he adds, half scared, half sad—"I don't owe nobody anything!" "Wal I don't see any letter," says the sapient postmaster. "If there was one it had ought to be on that ahelf, where it belongs. Seemed to me I *did* see one. Sure enough, here it is, on the floor. For *you*, Jenks." "For *me*?" asks Jenks, skeptically. And now the tables are turned. Great severity in the postmaster's tone and glance. "Your *name* is Jenkins Jenks, *ain't* it?" sharply. "Well, then, you jest take that letter, if you are goin' to." Jenks takes it, twirls it between thumb and finger, looks at it on each corner, slowly opens it, and his wrinkled features rustle out of their rigidity. "Why, it's from George Robbins! way down to California. Why! what on sirth! he has been writing to *me*. Why," to the interested group of listeners, "*you* remember Robbins? Him and me was boys together. He's a rich man *now*—they all *git* rich down to California. Who'd have thought of his remembering *me*? And here he is writing all about the elm-tree; and the pond where we caught the snapping-turtles; and that time we shared our dinner-basket in the lane. 'Precious hungry'—so we was! 'Tasted good'—guess it did! Why, Robbins is jest the same; not a mite spiled. Strange, that he should think of writing to *me*." And Jenkins Jenks smiles, but there are tears in his eyes. Jenkins Jenks walks out of that store, happier, healthier, larger-hearted, and longer-lived, for that letter. *Write the unlooked-for letters*. Write home; write home.

Write letters of the *Past*—no labored intelligence. They get that in the newspapers. Your death they will get there; as also your marriage, and the like. Write words of remembrance, that shall call up the early days. Put in the photographs; they are the real "tracts to distribute." They show what time has done, to waste and wear. They show what survives the waste and wear of time. The best sermons these that you can preach. Make presents; send souvenirs—if only a pebble from your garden-walk; only a leaf from your tree. It costs little; it counts much. Write home; write home.

Write from home, ye beloved! You need not tell us news of the election, nor remind us: "Suppose you have heard all about the great fire." Of course we have. Write to us of the dumb creatures we used to know, if any of them survive. Give us some intelligence of the favorite tree. Tell us that you went where we used to gather nuts. Send us a picture of the old barn-eaves, just as drooping as they are. Take us back to the play-ground. Show us the light and shadow on our mother's grave. Write us home-like things, from home.

But write home. Write home. There is a home at hand. There is a homestead where they re-assemble. It is their Christmas time and their Thanksgiving Day in one. It is their New Year, that shall never be old!

There is a postal department under the Creator's hand. His government takes the heart's letters, to convey them, overland-mail—ah, how safely crossing the mountains steeped in fog, along the highway that climbs the stars. Write home! Write home!

A WINTER SONG.

BY ASTLEY H. BALDWIN.

In the middle of the merry,
Joyous, leafy month of June,
When the roses were in flower,
And the nightingale in tune—

When the days were daily tending
Toward the glow-tide of July,
When the blush was on the clover,
And the bloom was on the rye—

Met I, by a rippling mill-stream,
Damsel young, and soft, and fair,
With a cheek of cream and crimson,
With a wealth of golden hair.

Straight I sighed, and she, replying,
Blushed a tender, rosy hue;
What meant blushing, what meant sighing,
When it passed betwixt us two?

Now the snow is on the heather,
Gone the roses, gone the birds,
Gone the day when two lives blended
Into one with two low words.

But though faded summer's glory,
Though abroad no more we roam,
Now we read life's sweet old story
In the garden land of—Home!

GRUDGERS.

WRITTEN FOR THE SATURDAY EVENING POST,
BY GLEN CAROL.

I hate people who do things grudgingly. If you cannot confer a favor, or do a kind deed, without your half-heartedness betraying itself in the very swish of your dress as you turn, and the half-veiled "snap" in your eye, saying, more plainly than words could, "I consider it an imposition to be obliged to do that which I could not well avoid offering to do for you"—if you cannot throw your whole soul into the services you render, then, for sweet pity's sake, let the objects of your generosity (!) alone; and don't, under the miserable pretext of adding to their comfort or happiness, render existence still more intolerable! If you cannot be gracious in your giving, then be a niggard forever. Don't throw your favors at a friend as you would toss a dog a bone. The manner of giving is oftentimes more precious than the gift to the receiver—and who would not struggle on, silently, and under a million discomforts, if need be, rather than seek from a friend friendly aid, and read the next moment his thought in his face, though his lips gave it the lie? Why people should say "yes" when they mean "no," is a puzzle and a mystery to a few of the more truthful. There are those, too, who having conferred a kindness with apparent graciousness and warmth of manner, await only the opportunity for communion with, and the assistance of congenial spirits to dissect you, body and soul, with a keener scalpel than surgeons use. All your faults—and these will be heaped mountain-high—will be severed one from the other by the pitiless steel, and laid out in horrid array upon the dissecting-table—while your virtues (if you are so fortunate as to be found in possession of anything of that description,) are carefully draped from view to await inspection at an indefinite period. Verily, these vultures must believe that the doing of a good deed, from motives of seeming kindness or charity, entitles them to the privilege of mouthing over both the deed and the unfortunate recipient forever afterward.

If people ask you to give your assistance in their behalf concerning this, that, or the other matter, and you, for good reasons of your own, do not feel justified in granting their requests, *do* have the honor and truthfulness to say plainly and decidedly, *No!*—entering into further explanation or not, as you deem appropriate—but don't, I beg of you *say* "*Yes!*" and act "*No!*" And don't make an unprincipled idiot of yourself, nor insult your friend by offering him lip, hand, or foot service, leaving your heart at home!

Ugly Men.

Few men have been more attractive to women than Mirabeau, who, when written to by one of his feminine admirers for a personal description, replied:—"Imagine a tiger that has had the small-pox, and my portrait is complete." He was so homely that he was handsome, and you who wish to find favor in the eyes of the fair should pray, if you cannot be as comely as Ferdinand, to be as ugly as Caliban. Downright plainness in sentimental assaults is as good as a scaling ladder against the wall. And when masculine homeliness owns a potent tongue, it holds odds against an average Apollo. John Wilkes declared that he was only half an hour behind the handsomest man in England, for it required just that time for him to talk away his face.

Mirabeau was cleverer still. When he spoke his looks were forgotten—he was transformed.

☞ Miss Kitty ——, daughter of Dr. ——, loves her father and takes an interest in his profession. The other day a lady friend called to see her, and asked her how she was and how she was getting along. "Oh, pretty well," answered Miss Kitty, "pretty well; plenty of colds, some bronchitis and a little typhus fever, but, as papa said yesterday, to make things lively what we need is a nice little epidemic."

☞ A man in St. Louis spends his time in going from house to house and reading to affrighted housekeepers and servant girls the ordinance against throwing slops and ashes into the alleys. A few hours later another man comes around and wants the job of hauling away the ashes in the alley, saying that he heard she had been "warned."

☞ The latest feminine fashion of wearing the front hair is known as the Skye terrier style.

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LOVE SONG.

WRITTEN FOR THE SATURDAY EVENING POST,

BY KATHERINE KINGSTON FILER.

A song I sing! a rhythmic song of love,
Of rapturous love that's tender, grand and true,
That doth unto itself all pleasure draw,
As bending skies absorb the rising dew.
To-night my heart is broken with passion sweet,
With passion sweet of love for one unknown,
And up life's vistas music of his feet,
That come through hidden groves, is onward blown.
Oh, welcome! welcome! welcome! is my song,
Broken in rapturous listening full oft,
For it seems I hear a voice the strain prolong,
And on my lips presage of kisses soft.
Stay me with flagons! sweet, too sweet ere't comes,
Is love! and I am sick of love!

A song I sing! a mellow song of love,
Of rhythmic measure fraught with quivering trills,
Of subtler harmony than tongue may say—
The tender utterance of the heart's deep thrills.
Life's winds blow soft, and waves a music make
In cadenced plashings on the shining shore;
And o'er the under-consonance doth wake
The murmur of a sound that flutters o'er
A sunny distance lessening twixt ear souls,
That folds my heart till 't yearns through happy tears;
Beloved, is it music of thy feet,
Thy comely feet, that hasten up the years?
With apples comfort me! for sweet, too sweet ere't comes,
Is love! and I am sick of love!

Oh, waves of time! Oh, shining waves that dash
Your silvery foam on silver wheel of fate,
With swifter motion break in iris sprays;
With open arms your heartcous gifts I wait,
Your gifts of trancing love and love's delight;
And all my heart goes forth and soft doth sing,
Like bliss-o'erburdened mavis in the night,
Goes forth, oh, waves, with greeting to its king!
Oh, welcome! welcome! welcome! is my song,
And as I sing it seems as one replied,
And with soft sighs my carol did prolong,
While stands he hid in mystery at my side,
Stay me with flagons! sweet, too sweet ere't comes,
Is love! and I am sick of love!

WERTZAL THE SCOUT;

OR,

The Phantom of the Black Hills.

WRITTEN FOR THE SATURDAY EVENING POST,

BY CAPTAIN CARNES.

CHAPTER XXX.

FOREBODINGS.

"Catherine, you haven't the least idea of how much I dread this journey. It seems to me as if I were destined never to be safe anywhere. I am now literally afraid of my shadow."

"I know, dear, and the more you yield to such emotions the closer they will cling to you. You recollect that I have also been in perilous situations, and have no pleasant anticipations of the undertaking, but I do not allow myself to borrow trouble. We have staunch earthly support in Wertzal, your cousin, and Rubber Dick."

"I know, and am grateful for that. Indeed, I could never bring my mind to think of undertaking to cross the plains without their companionship."

"*You*, at least, seem to be as safe on the plains as here. Besides this, the lieutenant puts the matter in imperative style. 'Don't you come without Emily.' I declare I am positively inclined to be jealous."

"If you only won't be," coaxed the soft voice—"you know I don't like to be joked on that matter, Kathy—it pricks like a thorn."

And then Cousin Richard comes in and interrupts the conversation—

"Are you likely to succeed, Mrs. Strother, in strengthening Emily's weak courage?"

"I don't see as I can leave her to choose, Strother having put the matter in the light that I am not to come without her."

"Now, then, cousin!"

"Oh, dear Dick, I don't know—am I ever to be rid of this horrible feeling that I am not awake—that this isn't yourself and Kate—Dick?"

"Of course," replied the young man, laughing, "you are to disabuse yourself of that singular fancy at once. Here you clutch me by the arm, and the same as ask if this is yourself and Kate? Certainly not; it isn't more than myself, that I know of."

"He's a dreadful tease," affirmed Emily, turning with a sort of hopeless smile to Catherine. "He always made me tangle myself in my own words."

"And I never have forgiven you for my reception after you returned from your explorations in the Rocky mountains."

"Black Hills, Dick;" she corrected, "Wertzal says I was in the Black Hills, ever so far this side of the Rockies; but what did I say?"

"You covered your eyes and screamed out—'oh, these horrible ghosts—don't, don't let them haunt me so!'"

"Wasn't it dreadful? and I thought that I was crazy then."

"And you were, or you would have kissed me after that long absence of mine."

"Kiss you? why, Richard! when for all that I knew poor George's ghost might have stood just behind your ghost. I'm sure, it was no more improbable than some strange things that have occurred, and he so terrible jealous of you?"

"Would ghosts fight?"

Emily turned hopelessly toward Kate.

"Isn't he awful?"

"You shall do penance, Cousin Dick;" said Catherine, with a pretty assumption of dignity, "if you tease the dear girl any more, you shan't go abroad with us."

The childishness of the threat caused a general laugh, and they were soon earnestly discussing the projected journey again.

"We ought to be at the fort by Tuesday night. Wertzal and Rubber Dick intend to meet us by the twentieth, and that will be next Wednesday."

"We can as readily start, causing our guides no delay, as remain a few days longer. I, like Emily, am anxious to have the journey over."

"So, then, the matter is duly arranged?" said Marsh.

"Yes; and we will begin packing the few articles which we deem necessary to carry along with us."

"Don't take any marked garments," put in Richard, "because the filibusters might get them and distribute them in the manner they did mine."

"I never have had a doubt, Dick, but that the dead man at the fort wearing your clothes was one of those who murdered poor Daly, and intended to do the same by yourself."

"It might, and it might not be; but your pleasantest way, cousin, is to bury those fancies and pack your portmanteau for another exploration."

CHAPTER XXXI.

BRETTE.

Wertzal and Dicky were ahead of time, arriving before the other parties whom they had engaged to meet. And it came to pass by this same early arrival that the old scout met with a huge surprise. Late in the evening a party of hunters came in from the Plains. Among them was one wearing a handkerchief in the form of a turban around his head. It was rather a masking sort of gear, and Wertzal had no sooner caught a glimpse of the hunter as he passed in, than he sprang to his feet ejaculating:

"By all the saints in the oullender!"

He then followed excitedly after the men, and coming up with the turbaned fellow, he seized him by the shoulder.

"It seems you air flesh an' blood then? By Jewpeter Olympus? I hain't had sich a twinge ov the gristle fur years. An' 'tis railly Brette?"

"The most of him," answered the other, with a grasp of the hand that made the joints crack.

"How upon airth did yer git clar with yer breathin' apparatus unpunctered?"

"How did you?"

"I tumbled under the carts, and Grouchy diskiverin' me, bethought him ov a roast, an' fur that purpose perdestined me, but his pitch-wig allies got in ther way ov little Joe Emmet, an' thar was a smart swoppin' ov axidents."

"And Bill got clear?"

"That follers; an' in going he gin me his compliments in the form of his leetle hatchet, which circumlocutated hansomly within a har's breadth of my thinkin' machine, whar, luckily fur me, it refused to enter—an' you?"

"I wear my roof without a thatch."

"What—impossebel!"

"Yes, they left me for dead."

"Had a morgage on yer wig and foreclosed—that's cussed. But I've about gin in that Grouchy is ter live ter see the present gineration pass away like stubble."

"No, sir," emphasized Brette, with an oath down deep in his throat, "I have a pistol loaded for him. I'll settle the matter about my scalp before long."

"An' if ye git at the figures handily, add in my invaluable eye—I'd do as much fur you, Brette."

"So you would, old fellow; and now what are you here for?"

"Gwine with a small party to Arizony."

"Mule train?"

"Oh, no, private individuals—three, or four, or five—dunno jest how many. Stage it for a piece, an' finish up with hosses or mules, I guess."

"Will you touch New Mexico?"

"Jest on the waist-bands like."

"I am going to New Mexico directly myself, and am a good mind for the sake of the company to hurry up matters—"

"Fall in! fall in!" yelled Wertzal, heartily. "If I ken help yer business enny by smokin' a huge pipe ev terbaccar, I'll do it with all my breath."

A smile passed over Brette's grim visage.

"Am going to join Vance at his new agency—as interpreter—you know."

"Yes, yes; yer allus was good at sputterin' the pitch-wig lingo—yer jest the man fur him; but why ain't I known you was on this munden spear afore?"

"Soon as I got fairly on my feet again, some traders picked me up and carried me to Salt Lake City. I went with Briggs's train toward the Red River country, and am just returned."

"Now, then, ye ken bag yer hed an' start agin. We've gut two wimmen in the gang, an' ez they've hed sum contermashious skeers on the flats, I kent blame 'em fur wantin' several spare rifles handy."

"Well, I'll go."

The matter being settled, the two old fellows sat half the night smoking and exchanging experiences, while a crowd of gaping listeners swallowed the records word by word; and Dicky outside knuckled the rheumatism out of the joints of the game wrestlers.

"I've secured another rifle to take along with us," announced Wertzal on the day when Marsh and the girls arrived.

"Is it for me?" questioned Kate.

"The Airyzony lieutenant would object, ez the rifle would not amount ter much without the scout as it belongs to holdin' it."

"Ah," answered she, laughing, "the morning air hasn't sharpened my wits. May I know him?"

"Brette."

"Brette!" they all exclaimed, for the name was as familiar as a household word.

"Three cheers for Brette."

At night the stage came in.

"Relays and supper," was the order.

"That is the famous Fitzjohn," whispered Catherine to Emily. "He would be capital to fight Italian banditti, that you used to read of in your delightful novels, Emily. He is the most competent driver, every one says, that this line has had for five years."

"Which is he?" questioned Emily with lively interest.

"The shorter one of those two talking with Richard. The taller one is—I think it must be—his brother, Col. O. Fitzjohn. If *he* were only going along we should have a host. Wait—there! He is from Golden City, Colorado, on his way to Prescott, Arizona. Isn't that splendid? Isn't he an elegant-looking man?"

"But I should judge him to possess less muscular strength than his brother."

"Oh, our driver is a perfect Hercules, and as brave as a lion. They want to get him off this business—have offered him the Deputy Marshal's office, and that of Sheriff, and Chief of Police, and a score of other promotions in adjoining States and Territories, but he answers that he shall keep the mail going regular on this line until he finds another fellow willing to come under bonds to do the same, when he will gracefully yield the ribbons."

"I am only too glad that he hasn't accepted an office up to this time," remarked Mrs. Armstrong.

"Supper, ladies and gentlemen," called "mine host," urbanely.

During the meal Mrs. Strother and Emily entered into an animated conversation with the colonel. He was personally acquainted with Mrs. Strother's husband, and also with Captain Vance. Besides this pleasant fact, Emily's wild adventures were known to him, and so a mutual interest was felt by all parties.

"Our route to-night," remarked the colonel, "has been very quiet now for some months. I was troubled in this direction earlier in the season by a haunting desperado, whom, at odd jobs, I have hunted from the eastern border of Dacota territory to the southern boundary of Texas. He is a government defaulter on an immense scale, and I first started him up in New York city; thence he fled to the West—the covert or hiding-place for all Uncle Sam's disobedient children. For more than a year, it illustrated the nursery riddle of "round the house, and round the house;" he being after me, and I in pursuit of him; I intent on capture—he purposing to murder. Suddenly, on the borders of Texas, he became as if he had never been."

"But that does not throw you off your guard?" anxiously queried Kate.

"Nothing, so to speak, throws me off my guard—in this section of country especially."

"Colonel O. Fitzjohn," called some new comer.

"Well, sir?" questioned he addressed, "what is wanted?"

A boy advanced and laid a folded piece of paper by the colonel's plate, and turning around disappeared from the room.

The missive ran:—

"Fitzjohn—Yer hadn't better keep the reg'lar rout; swing off terwards the —— fork. The reds is planin' an attac' 'pon the mules. D. L."

"What do you make of that?" asked the colonel, passing the dirty and villainously written document to his brother.

"It means a trap somewhere."

"I think so; Wertzal, what is your judgment upon the matter?"

And Fitzjohn read the billet aloud.

"Fust find ef the courier is near abouts, to kerry my opinion to any interested hossman here."

The boy was undiscoverable.

"Do you advise that we take the trail by the forks?"

"I don't b'leve the ambuskade is thar, fur all of the ink yender."

"You don't?"

"No, sir. It's 'parent to me that whoever sent that note, don't b'leve that the Fitzjohns air fools. They kalkeriated ye'd suspect suthin an' let the forks trail alone, an' go by the reg'lar route, an' thar's whar the trap is."

"By Heavens, Dan, he's right," said the colonel; "and what do you say?"

"Right or not, it is my direct route through to F——. I drive on this line *direct*, until I make up my mind to leave the business."

"All right," echoed every man.

The ladies had retreated into another apartment, and did not hear the latter conversation.

"Boot and saddle," called the driver, cheerily, to the groom.

And Emily whispered to Kate about the rare, good-faced fellow, who, on a former occasion had never arisen from the ground after the desperado shot him in the box where he sat, but wounded to death, had dragged himself into a hollow to die; and Dick, delirious and fever-blinded, had not seen him where he lay dead on the plain.

"Emily, we may have trouble again. Col. Fitzjohn fears it, but you dare not be left here."

"No, oh, no; let me go with you, and share your fate."

"Fresh primin', and everything handy!" called out Wertzal, climbing, by especial request, outside with the driver.

Rubber Dick was curled up on the very top of the vehicle, like an overgrown ape, while the Colonel, Marsh, Brette, and one other man, were packed inside with Mrs. Strother and Emily. The six high-shouldered, well-disciplined horses, recognizing the master-hand so evenly drawing the ribbons, leaped forward in unison, and took up a pace that made the heavily-freighted vehicle rock on its springs like a cradle.

It was a soft, still night, with sluggish clouds swimming across a large moon that for some days past had been mending the huge gouge in her disk, and would ere long lift a silvery, unmarred shield against the shooting stars. The light and darkness alternating, bothered the strongest vision. Two, three, four hours of uninterrupted riding passed safely.

"Forewarned is forearmed," muttered the scout, with his rifle resting against his knee, and his vigilant thumb upon the drawn-up hammer.

"Five miles ahead we shall sight the last settlement before we come to the open plain. After that, we shall see no more of civilization till eight o'clock to-morrow morning, when we shall touch at the new military outpost."

"You haul up for hosses ahead, I suppose?" questioned Marsh, with his head thrust out of the open window.

"Yes; I can do no better. But I let these out of the shafts much fresher than those of to-morrow morning."

"The route is rather unevenly divided."

"Yes; but the relays here are always extra horse-flesh. Get up, Sultan." The long lash doubled up and exploded in a percussion snap, that made the high-blooded leaders cringe.

Fitzjohn seldom struck his animals. When he did so, however, the brute instinct interpreted it as a command of vital importance. He made it a point to have the same changes of horses on the route both ways, and every beast backed up to the heavy stage knew his voice, and guided their legs by its intonations.

"I calculated that we should be attacked on this first twenty-five miles. Yonder, at Pultney, I deliver over a heavy mail for southern sections, which materially lessens our danger."

"We ain't in yet, Fitzjohn."

"No, Wertzal; but," looking at his watch by moonlight, "we're within three miles of the place, and we're not apt to be attacked so close in."

"What's loosened up?" said the scout. "Your old vehecck is a creakin' in the bowels, or— What in Jupiter?—"

"You hold up, Fi'john, you hold up;" and Rubber Dick sprang to his feet on the top of the tossing carriage. "Thar, you hear that?"

Only a practised ear could detect anything save the champing bit and rattling buckle.

"Thar—that; hear that?'

"By the heavings, it's firing."

"You be right, Wertz—much. heap guns! pung, ping! pung, ping! off this-a-way—sow—"

"At Pultney," says Colonel Fitzjohn, springing outside the carriage, with Dick Marsh, to listen. "What does it mean?"

"Thar's jist one meanin'; ain't a proper time and light for target-shootin', so it means *attack*."

"To your places," yelled the driver, "and hold on. Now, beasts, a lively dance—lively, lively," and the long lash writhed through the air, and gave out its percussion explosion close by the ear of the off leader. Every leg straightened itself for business.

"Goin' into Pultney, hey?" bawled Wertzal in Fitzjohn's ear.

"Going into Pultney! Measure off, beauties—hey, Sultan, hey git, git up!"

The lash came around again, *crack!*

"No playing now," said the beasts to themselves, and the distracting rattle of bits and buckle came into a regular *chink! chink!* even as a pulse-beat.

Dicky, curled up on top, held to the iron rail with the pertinacity of a rubber ape, in a position that allowed of his small, black eyes sweeping the southern landscape.

Fitzjohn now and then gave a wild yell to his horses. The other travellers were silent and held to their seats. Mrs. Strother and Emily fearing every instant to strike some obstacle and thus be upset.

The excited animals were actually taking the distance at a flying pace, swaying a little from side to side as if expecting something to dash upon them unawares. They could hear the shouts of the combatants now, and Fitzjohn, braced against the fender, was standing bolt upright, lashing his horses. Rubber Dick with feet wide apart, was ready for a leap when a mile from the conflict. Colonel O. Fitzjohn, but little less excited, grasped the door on one side of the stage, and Dick Marsh on the other. Brette and the other man inside, and Wertzal on the outside, appeared unmoved.

"Smoke! fire! big blaze! Hi-yah, hi-yah, yah!"

The Indian yell of Dicky gave new impetus to the already flying steeds.

They were close into Pultney now; but they were expected. A little outside, a squad of painted devils leaped at the foremost horses and the stage simultaneously.

"We distribute the mail," called out one of the renegades, whose eyes were encircled with rings of red cobre.

"No by —" shouted Fitzjohn, "no doubt you're an old hand, but *I'm agent on this route*;" and he leaped along the trampling horses' backs, and right and left opened a tunnel in the brains of the ruffians clinging to the leaders.

"*I go straight into the Town-House*," he yelled, dropping astride the nigh leader, and shouting, "Get up! get up! Sultan, hey! Beauty, get up."

No half-dozen men could withstand the charge of the six already infuriated beasts, doubly excited now by the reports of fire-arms and the well-known yells of their master.

Meanwhile the other passengers were not idle. Wertzal, at the moment of attack, had spouted out from one side of the vehicle and Rubber Dick from the other. Dick Marsh knocking his hat off in his plunge through the door, rushed bare-headed into the melee, followed by Brette, whose turban-like head-gear was dipping and rising and twisting in a perfect convulsion of rage.

But when Colonel Fitzjohn attempted to leap out, he was suddenly seized by the hair of the head, and jerked backward by the before-named other inside passenger. A knife-blade gleamed in the moonlight, but Catherine Strother caught the assassin's arm by the coat-cuff, and jerked it back with such unexpected force, that the bent wrist striking against the iron fastening of the door, hurled the knife outside. The next moment the colonel had whirled over upon his knees, and had grasped the ruffian by the throat. They were on the floor of the stage, and just as Fitzjohn was seizing the miscreant's throat, the assassin managed to shout:

"Boys, here's Colonel O. Fitzjohn. Take care of Fitzjohn—"

"I'll do that," aspirated the colonel, grappling with him; and the horses plunging under the fierce cries of the driver, the stage lurched heavily, and the struggling combatants were tossed outside among the grating, tangled-up wheels.

"Rubber Dick, defend Colonel Fitzjohn," called his brother, still urging his frantic horses through the yelling, fighting masses, and discharging his revolver in the face of the determined demons who grappled for the leaders.

But they would have spitted him,—they would have spitted the whole party, had not the screams and shouts and rattling musketry reached the ears of a company of soldiers returning from guarding a train through the Delawares' country.

The wild, fierce, clarion cry that heralded the charge of the cavalry had already become a terror to the border ruffians.

"By the powers, that's Joe Emmet's bugle!" panted Brette, whose invincible head-gear had clung to his unthatched roof, and worked itself into a portable rage with every frantic motion of its wearer. It had whirled and crested and dipped and danced in the maelstrom of the fight.

"Joe Emmet's bugle!" he called; and "*Joe Emmet's bugle!*" came back the reply from the sturdy settlers; "one more blow for Joe Emmet."

Consternation seized the miscreants; and, although their number far exceeded that of the soldiery and settlers combined, those of them that could flee beat a demoralized retreat.

Straight through the town, whose outer edge was blazing, Joe Emmet pursued the fugitives; and not until the sun was swinging his disk above the eastern boundary, and the flames were beaten into subjugation by the brave pioneers, did the handful of soldiers return from the chase, having dotted their route with lay figures of aboriginal abstraction.

Neither had Mrs. Strother and Emily been wholly passive. They clung to the vehicle during the driver's running fight, and when he had drawn up to the little hostelry, known as the Town House, having thereabout a secret hiding-place for the steel-jawed bags, they leaped out, and, hand in hand, crossed the street, and came up to the burning buildings. Here they gallantly yielded their shawls to the occasion, plunging them into the tubs of water, and helped beat back the flames with them, as the red tongues crept up the sides of the cabins.

With daylight, after the fire was subdued, and the brave settlers were sizzling over their smarting wounds, or groaning above their dead, Wertzal, for once coming out "unwrit on," as he had it, astonished all those in his vicinity by one of his hoarse, slow yells.

He had been stalking like a one-eyed vulture among the dead, and standing over a prostrate body had first yelled and then explained to those who hurried up.

"By all the saints in the oullender, here's game. A leather medal to ther fellar as can prove that he winged the bird."

"Who is it?" they inquired, looking down upon the hideously-painted visage.

"Don't ye know, boys, the chap as hez lost the left lappell to his hed; leastwise the uncompromisin' borderers tuk an ear ev hisn in the Smoky Hill country fur meddlin' with hosses? Why, this ere's *Bill Grouchy*."

"It can't be," they rejoined.

"Wall, 'tis, sartain; an'," stooping closer, "he ain't dead nuther, he kinder squirmed then."

"Take care of yourself; if he is alive, he'll kill somebody else," called out one of the settlers.

"Take his knife an' pistols—it's the safest—he ain't hardly ter be trusted dead," added another.

"He kent hurt nobody," and Wertzal touched him slightly with the toe of his boot. "The sap, ye see," pointing to a pool of blood, "is a'most run out ev the old trunk. No, Bill's got ter find out what's in the other country afore us, boys."

The eyes of the dying renegade suddenly flared open. No gleam of hatred now shot upon the surrounding group. It was evident that if he saw them it was with so dimmed a vision that he did not recognize them. The muscles of his horribly-painted face twitched convulsively in an effort to speak.

"Hez any on ye got a drop ev whisky in yer canteens? Good fur evil in the last minnits, boys."

Some one passed Wertzal a portion of liquor. The old scout dropped on one knee, raised the head of the dying renegade, and forced a spoonful of the spirit through his lips. But he was too far gone to revive. Wertzal listened to his hoarse whispers. Evidently he was unconscious of his whereabouts, but not wholly unconscious of his state. He addressed an imaginary companion:

"We allus fit, Jim, way back thar in ther old Canadian cabin. I never believed we war both the cubs of one dam—never. I pushed him out ov ar tree an' broke his back—made a fool ov him—an' he growed up a horrible toad—only knew enough to hate like the devil. I got scared of him an' fled away here, but he chased me—an' killed my half-breed wife and stole the young 'un. I've hunted for her—you hunt, Jim. She had a mark—two strawberries, we called um, behind the left ear—the little one above the big one—find her—find her." The brute instinct of affection for its young was not dead.

To all appearance the ruffian was gone. But a minute after his breast heaved and he gasped—

"Don't yer hurt him, Jim—don't yer—"

"Hurt who?" queried the old scout.

"The Canadian—half-breed—cub—the phan—phantom of the—"

He was gone this time.

"Wall, wall," and Wertzal got upon his feet and looked down upon the horrible corpse. "Wall, Bill, thar ain't a fellar here to mutter a prayer fur yer soul. It's hard; but then ye git yer desarts at last."

"What was he saying?"

"Oh, torkin'ter some Jim about his young un as was stole," and the rest of the communication was reserved for a few private ears in the future. "Who ever forced him inter the horizontail persition deserves to be the patrunt saint ov the border; leastwise, I don't know ov a fellar as could better be spared off the face of the airth than Bill Grouchy."

"Yer right!" called out a number of the rough settlers.

"I ain't gwine ter say that bekause this cussed pitch-wig instergator is about ter be drove in a hole, that there comes quiet to ther settlemunts, fur devilishness is like suthin' that the larned call pollypus—cut off an' kill one piece as is troublous, and several more sprout out in place ov the old un. Howsomdever, let's move on. Ef the settlers ken do anything with his earthy taberknuckle, let 'em. He an' I warn't perticklerly staunch friends when he war here, an' I sartinly hope thar ain't no other spear what we'll hev ter foller the trail tergether. Now let's see ef our company is all able to anser to roll-call.

"Col. O. Fitzjohn—wall, I declar ef they hain't spoilt yer pictur *good*."

Wertzal found them all, and for once could be facetious over the matter. He alone had escaped unmarred.

(TO BE CONTINUED.)

MADAME DUFOUR.

BY E. LYNN LINTON.

"I wonder who she is?" said Walter Drummond, looking back as he left the churchyard.

"Who?" asked Kate Hyslop, with a displeased air.

"That lady in the blue-and-gold shawl, who sat opposite to us in church," he answered.

"Oh, that red-headed woman?" indifferently. "Why, she was a stranger, of course; what else should she be?"

"But I wonder who she is, and where she comes from," repeated Walter with insistence.

"Really, Walter, you are very odd! What concern can it be of yours, and why should you wonder about her at all?" returned Kate with her iciest manner; and her betrothed, taking the hint, let the matter drop. But thought being free, he pondered all the more, and wearied himself with conjecturing, "Who can she be?" and "Is she going to stay here?"

Hinton, where they all lived, was not a pretty place; nor a very secluded place; nor a place that led to anywhere else; nor that was of any importance anyhow. It was just a dull English village without a history; where life went on from year to year in the same groove. So that the prospect of a beautiful young woman, a stranger to everybody, locating herself at Hinton, was something to be noted as a phenomenon; and Walter's curiosity was only natural, under the circumstances.

Soon the whole place was astir with the news that a Madame Dufour, the pretty woman who had sat on Sunday in the chancel just opposite the vicarage pew, had taken Elm Cottage where old Miss Donne had lived; and that she was busy furnishing it in a manner so costly as to be next door to wicked.

Here, then, was food for endless speculation, and guesses at the riddles set by charity or ill-nature. A lady, young, beautiful; evidently rich far beyond the measure of the village; with a foreign name and an English accent; a madame with never a monsieur to the fore, yet not in widow's weeds; not an inch of clue to her former history or her last abode—what better amusement could Hinton have for the dreary winter months than discussing such a phenomenon, and quarrelling over the probabilities of her worthlessness or her respectability? So far as that went, however, the majority of voices decided in favor of the former; and but a few of the more credulous, of whom Walter Drummond, the vicar's only son, was the chief, stood out for the theory of her respectability, "until she should be proved the other thing." Which was just the difficulty; proof on either side being exactly the one thing needed.

The stranger came regularly to church, which counted for something in her favor; and she was reported kind to the poor, and charitable beyond the common run of even generous folks. Not that Hinton quite endorsed this last trait. It had its own ideas about excess of any kind; and excess of virtue fared no better at its hands than if it had been a vice. Little by little, however, her pleasant smile and genial manner broke down some of the stiffer prejudices which her strangerhood and unlikeness to Hinton laws of life had created; and after a sufficient time had elapsed to forbid the appearance of injudicious haste, the vicar and his wife called on her—rather solemnly, it must be confessed, but with a good meaning at bottom.

The next step was to ask her to tea. Kate Hyslop was by no means well pleased when she heard of this arrangement; and in general Kate Hyslop's wishes ruled the vicarage. But Mr. Drummond had certain notions on priestly duties which not even his heiress ward could touch; and this was one of them. He had taken it into his counsel that it was his duty, as the father of his flock, to usher in among them this outlying sheep of his fold; and he did it; though his future daughter-in-law tossed up her small, smooth head in disdain, and even the placid wife of his bosom looked dubious. So now Madame Dufour was marked with the right brand, and the whole parish gathered round her and bleated her a welcome to their pastures. From having been a kind of exile among them, she became the most popular plaything of the day; Kate Hyslop alone refusing to bleat with the rest, or to burn incense at her shrine.

From the first there was a distinct antagonism between these two women; and from the first Kate hated Madame Dufour, and Madame Dufour feared Kate. Those cold, steel-gray eyes of hers, which no one had ever seen dark with love or moist with tenderness, were like weapons that seemed to kill all sympathy, all affection. Her calm voice that never faltered, her composed manner that never hurried, her set words that disdained to trip over a colloquialism, her whole being, controlled, conventional, of the strictest order of the Pharisees—what a contrast she formed to the bright, versatile, pleasure-loving Madame Dufour, whose fair face was like a mirror wherein you could read her ever-changing moods, and whose voice and manner had all the tremulous shades which belong to a sensitive nature—or consummate art! But Kate saw no beauty in her.

"She fatigues me with her vivacity; she sickens me with her theatrical sentiment, and her affectation of grace is too transparent for anything but contempt," she said scornfully, when asked if Madame Dufour was not charming.

While she on her side said, with a pretty action she had with her hands, "Miss Kate Hyslop? She is the ice-maiden bound in chains! she makes me shudder as if she were a ghost."

"Or a detective," said Kate, with emphasis; when some good-natured friend reported to her what the new-comer had said.

The word struck. It was bitter and cruel; but then bitter things and cruel always do strike; and Miss Hyslop's sharp surmise made the round of the parish underhand, folks whispering among themselves, "She is not so far out, isn't our vicar's young lady; and maybe the detective will light on our fine madame some day, at last." But no one said this to her, and the pretty stranger still lived in the sunshine and nourished herself on incense.

Walter Drummond's habits were changing. From a docile, steady, methodical young man, in to time, proverbially good-natured if not very bright, and as innocently candid as a child, he was fast becoming irregular, uncertain and reticent. He was always out, and no one knew where; nor would he explain when he came home, silent and depressed as no one had ever seen him before. Neither his mother's business nor his fiancée's pleasures touched him.

Kate looked on at this change said, and nothing. She had evidently her own mind on the matter; and Mrs. Drummond, who knew her, was quite aware of the future preparing for her boy. But she wisely left them to fight it out between them, knowing that the struggle had to come, if not about one thing then about another; and Kate had to be crowned queen when all was over.

"Walter, I want you to ride with me to-day," said Kate one morning.

"I am very sorry," he answered hurriedly; "I cannot to-day."

"No! Why?"

"I have the boat to look to," he said.

She fixed her cold eyes on him steadily, and her look brought the blood into his face.

"Are you going to visit Madame Dufour again?" she said scornfully. "You need not speak, Walter, your looks are answer enough," she added. "Pray don't add falsehood to the list of your lately acquired accomplishments. It is what I have long suspected; what, knowing you, and how weak you are, I foresaw from the first."

"And what is it you suspected and foresaw from the first, may I ask?" said Walter angrily.

"Why should I say it? You know as well as I; and I don't care to dig in ploughed ground," she answered slowly.

"I will not allow your insinuations!" said Walter with vehemence.

"Will you not? But if I choose to make them?"

"Then I will not listen to them," he said.

"Your friend shall, Walter," said Kate deliberately.

"Kate, you are trying me too far!" he cried. "What folly is this you have taken up?"

"No folly at all, Walter—on my side. I will forbear to characterise what you have taken up, on yours. I only know the fact, that all these long absences of yours—these mysterious affairs which occupy you from morning to night—mean simply that you are spending the time you deny to us with this Madame Dufour. I say no more, and insinuate no more—no more, at least," she added with a slight sneer, "than your own conscience echoes."

"And if I do see Madame Dufour at times, am I not master of my own actions?" said Walter.

"I also of my own thoughts," she replied.

"You are free to be your own mistress for all time, and in all ways, so far as I am concerned," said Walter indignantly, a great hope irradiating his face as he spoke.

"Thanks," she answered, her monotonous voice as calm as ever. "You mean that for magnanimity, I dare say; but I shall not accept it. I always have been, and always mean to be, my own mistress under all circumstances; you know that, Walter. But we have wandered from our point—will you ride with me to-day?"

"I told you before, I cannot," said Walter sullenly.

"Very well," she answered; "but neither shall Madame Dufour."

She rose on this and walked steadily and quietly out of the room, leaving Walter with the sensation that a thunderbolt had fallen at his feet.

Kate had seen clearly and spoken truly. Walter had carried to the beautiful stranger the inner wealth of a nature which, until now, had been given to no one. The fascination which had begun on that first day when he saw her sitting opposite to him in church, fair as a flower, the sun touching her golden hair like an aureole, and dyeing the blue and gold of her Indian shawl into a kind of mystic drapery fit for an angel or a saint, had gone on until now, and had gone on increasing. He had engaged himself to Kate Hyslop two years ago, it is true; but it was a thing that had been done for him, more than one which he had voluntarily chosen for himself. His parents wished it; Kate's father had wished it; and Kate herself wished it—which clenched the matter. So Walter, who was merely a good-natured, unexacting, inexperienced boy as yet—a manly young fellow enough in frame, but a little "soft" in his character, by having been kept close to his mother's apron-string all his life—drifted into the affair as boys of his kind do drift into such a thing, when manifestly prepared for them by the potent influences at home. At the best, however, Kate was only to him like a sister; not always so nice, and not always so dear.

When Madame Dufour came, the chained fountain leaped into life and melody. To say that he loved her is to say little. It was adoration, more than common love. It was the worship of a devotee for a saint, combined with the tenderness of strength for something weaker, more yielding, less helpful than itself. He loved her as he had never loved before, as he had had no prevision he could have ever loved at all. And she? Well! she first played, and then she learned.

That sensitive face with its ever-changing expression, like the tremulous sunshine that flatters among the leaves, grew daily more tender, more responsive. Yet in word and act she affected a staid, half grave maternity that merely fascinated her adorer the more. He was "her boy," she used to say with those sweet lips of hers that looked as if they had not been in existence more than twenty years at most—Kate Hyslop always said she was long past thirty, and "made up;" and the youth—just two years older than she looked—longed to tell her that, if he was a boy to her in the humility of his devotion, the nothingness of his personality, he was a man to himself in the passion and the power of his love.

But, now, what was he to do? Brought face to face with Kate's not unfounded suspicion and not unrighteous wrath, he felt that he must take a step as decided as it would be final. He must choose which to do—abandon Madame Dufour, or break with his betrothed; cease to visit the one he loved better than his life—and if so, what reason to give her, she who was so far above him he dared not even hint at his love?—or he must disappoint his parents, mar his future prospects, break his plighted word, and distress one whose only fault was her love for him and her claim to be loved in return. Like many a braver man, Walter postponed his decision; waiting for events to steer him, and clear themselves.

At luncheon-time he rushed off to Elm Cottage, thinking only that, come what would, at least he should see her once again.

Was he expected? Half lying, half sitting on the sofa, was Madame Dufour, dressed, as she always did dress, in the most exquisite, the most seductive manner; indeed, she did not dress, she draped. On a small table, covered with ruby-colored velvet, stood wine, fruit and flowers, and a large bowl of old Venetian glass, full of ice. It was ethereal food for luncheon; but Madame Dufour was ethereal in her food, and often spoke with laughing scorn of the materialistic English miss who ate and drank like a man. Kate Hyslop had what is called a wholesome appetite, and liked cheese and beer.

"Ah, my boy!" she said with her caress-

ing accent and young-motherly manner, holding out both her hands to him as he came in, but not rising to receive him. "Toujours le bienvenu!"

"How kind you are to let me come," stammered Walter, flinging himself on a footstool by her side. He was pale and agitated, but his eyes told the old story as eloquently as they had always told it. "How can I ever thank you for all your kindness to me?"

"By not assuming that I have been kind at all," she said; "or," lightly touching his shoulder with her fan, "by putting it the other way, Mr. Walter, and counting me grateful to you."

The young man flung back his head; Madame Dufour's fair face flushed, and her eyes drooped at the love that was in his.

He took her hand, and carried it to his lips. "Better than the wealth of the world!" he murmured in a low voice; but she, playfully pulling one of his brown curls, said in a pretended anger that was more bewitching than even her kindness,

"That is what you deserve, naughty boy! You presume too much, mon ami."

"And the punishment will make me transgress again," said Walter timidly, still holding her hand.

"Fi donc! was there ever such a forward boy? Un petit écolier comme ça! Ma foi! you are beyond your age, Master Walter!"

"But not beyond your—" He stopped, and trembled visibly.

"My forbearance? Soit! But we women are all weak," she said, helping him out of his difficulty.

"Not at all," said Walter with a rueful recollection of Kate; and madame laughed, as if she had divined.

Just then a ring came to the front door.

"Tiens! who can that be?" she cried, with surprised eyebrows.

Walter first crimsoned like a school-boy caught, and then turned pale like a man before whom is a struggle unto death. He knew who it was, clearly enough; and Madame Dufour read his knowledge in his face.

So, the battle had come, had it? Bien! She was ready. Let it come, if it must; and the sooner the relative strength of each was known the better.

She never raised herself from her lounging attitude, but even curled herself round into softer lines. The tender manner grew more tender, the sweet, low voice more caressing, the creeping touch of her long white hand more velvety, as it first pushed back the golden fringe that shadowed her forehead, then rested on Walter's chestnut head; the tremulous face no longer dimpled with smiles or quivered with sympathy, but took on itself a mask half-mocking, half-impassive, and wholly irritating to an antagonist; and then Miss Hyslop was ushered into the room, to find the siren in her most dangerous mood, surrounded by her most bewitching accessories, with her own lover, who was also her rival's, sitting at her feet, worshipping.

"Miss Hyslop! how very kind!" said Madame Dufour in a pretty, languid voice. "A rare pleasure, but none the less welcome," she added, offering her hand, but still keeping to the sofa and those graceful undulating lines and curves into which she had posed herself.

"I came for Mr. Drummond, Madame Dufour; not to pay you a visit," said Kate in her stoniest manner. "Walter, you are wanted at home."

"Poor Walter! I hope he is not to be scolded very severely at home," said Madame Dufour with a mocking accent, and a tender glance at the young man.

"Who wants me?" asked Walter, indifferently, playing with madame's little dog.

"I," said Kate; and she said it plump and hard.

"Your pleasure?" was Walter's reply, not looking up.

"I prefer not to discuss my affairs in public," said Kate. "I want you; that is enough; so, if you please, Walter, come; and at once."

"I am engaged," said Walter: "I cannot."

"Madame Dufour, I must ask your assistance," then said Kate, turning to her rival. "Will you kindly command Mr. Drummond to obey me?"

"What an extraordinary proposition!" laughed the siren. "What do you take me for, Miss Hyslop?"

"What do I take you for?" repeated Kate very slowly, and eyeing her keenly. "Well, I might take you for many things—for an actress, say; or an adventuress; for a runaway; perhaps for a woman who ought to be—where shall I say?—in Millbank for forgery, like that Clara Bell the papers were so full of just before you came here; or I might take you for an honest woman, intending no evil to any one, and careful to avoid scandal. You see, Madame Dufour, a stranger as you are, may be anything. Who knows?"

During Kate's speech Madame Dufour's face had not changed a muscle, save the faintest quivering of her upper lip, and the sudden starting of big drops both on it and on her brow.

"You have a fertile fancy, Miss Hyslop," she drawled out with a little laugh. "Really your roll-call of possibilities is so crowded, I cannot remember half my probable characters."

"Have you taken leave of your senses, Kate?" demanded Walter, sternly.

"No; but you have," she replied, as sternly. "Again I ask, Walter, will you leave Madame Dufour, and come with me?"

"And again I answer, I will not," said Walter, taking the long white hand in his. "You have made it necessary, Kate, that some one should protect madame from insult; and I will be the one to do so."

"Poor simpleton!" said Kate with disdain. "You are a greater fool, Walter, than I took you for; and I never thought you very wise. However, your wisdom or your folly is no business of mine. I have done my duty, and you must act as you choose."

Without another word she turned round, and went out; and as she shut the street-door after her Madame Dufour sank into Walter's arms in a violent fit of sobbing and weeping; and Walter, holding her to his heart, kissed away her tears, and told her that he loved her better than life itself, and that he would devote his life to her service, now and forever.

"Dear boy!" she said, at length, smiling through the disorder of her passion. "It was worth the anguish of enduring her insolence to know that I have such a preux chevalier—that I have rescued such a gallant soul from so ungenial a fate!"

And while this scene was taking place Kate was walking homeward through the lane, muttering, half aloud, "I wonder if that shaft struck true! I could not read her face. I wonder if it is she, after all! That foolish fellow! But I will not let him go, all the same. He suits me: and he will soon forget that wicked woman when he finds out what she is, if she is as I believe her to be. If she is not—"

But this thought displeased her, and she put it from her to indulge the dream that she was what a certain letter—received that morning from London in answer to one of inquiry from her touching a suspicion she had entertained from the first—gave great cause to suppose.

Kate was so far wise in her generation that she could hold her peace. Having shot her bolt, she could afford to wait the result. Accordingly, when Walter returned home late in the evening, she received him with the quiet stolidity common to her: and neither by word nor look made the faintest reference to the stormy scene that had taken place at Elm Cottage that morning. If anything, indeed, she was kinder than usual to her lover; while he, fuming and excited, found himself in the unpleasant position of a man engaged to two women at once, and held to his bond by the one he was burning to throw over. She prevented, too, the reproaches with which his father and mother were charged; and gained golden opinions for her own part for the generous affection they said she displayed toward one so unsatisfactory.

"Oh! I know him. He will come back to his better self as soon as this horrid creature has gone; and go she shall," she said, smiling in a frosty manner; while Mrs. Drummond kissed her, tearfully, and the vicar called her "blessed among women."

"Mamma," she said to Mrs. Drummond, two or three days after this, during which they had scarcely seen Walter; nor had she noticed a certain letter of his, giving her back her freedom, and breaking off the proposed marriage! "I want you to ask Madame Dufour to dinner to-morrow."

"My love!" said the vicar's wife, in a tone of astonishment; "why have that odious woman here?"

"Do not ask me, pray," she answered. "I wish it."

"Well, my dear, of course you know we all study your wishes in everything," said Mrs. Drummond, humbly. "I am sure, if you like it, I have no objection; and I suppose papa will have none."

"Thanks. A gentleman is coming from London," then said Kate indifferently.

And Mrs. Drummond's eager note of demand was stifled in its birth by the impenetrable loiness of look that her future daughter-in-law turned full upon her.

"Then there will be two to dinner?" she said, fidgetting.

"If Madame Dufour comes, yes," answered Kate.

"Very well, dear, returned Mrs. Drummond. "I will see to the dinner."

"What is the meaning of this, my boy?" asked pretty Madame Dufour, when the servant brought in a note from the vicarage, requesting the pleasure of her company at dinner to-morrow at half-past six o'clock.

Walter was startled, too. What did it mean? Had his father and mother taken to heart how things stood with him; and were they prepared to receive her he loved as their own? Had Kate spread a snare?—or was she, too, minded to be generous, and to give up what she could not hold?—or did it all mean nothing more than an ordinary act of politeness, a piece of parsonic hospitality to one of the flock?

"Shall I go?" then asked Madame.

"Oh, yes! yes!" exclaimed Walter.

"You wish it, my boy?" and her hand passed caressingly over the youth's forehead."

"Wish it. Do I wish to live in Heaven!" he cried. "Don't you know it is Heaven to me where you are?"

"But this terrible Miss Kate; will she like to see me?"

"Oh! don't you know that my mother would not have asked you else?" answered Walter, innocently. "Kate is the mistress of the vicarage, not my mother."

"And she will not insult me again? She will not punish me, Walter, for what I cannot help—your love for me; and"—in a lower voice, a shy, sweet, tremulous voice—"mine for you?"

On his knees before her, his fresh, young, fervid face turned upward to hers as she bent so gracefully, so tenderly toward him, his glad eyes dark and moist with the passionate love which at last had found its home, Walter poured forth his thanks, his adoration, his protestations there was nothing to fear, and his assurance of defence, in a breath; and Madame Dufour, smiling, radiant, lovely, turned to her writing-table and wrote her acceptance of the invitation on pink scented paper with a golden monogram and coronet on the top.

"You see," she said, with a pretty laugh, pointing it out to Walter, "I am really a countess: but this is the only sign of my state in which I indulge myself. A countess with a couple of maids in a remote English village! Trop ridicule, n'est-ce pas, mon ami?"

Ah! what loveliness, what humility, what condescension, what rational understanding of life! All this and more Walter trolled forth as his song of love; and madame played the symphony to his praises by her own praises of him.

The gentleman from London came, true to his time; and Kate took it on herself to show him the one local lion, namely, the church, with its old monuments, its fine Norman arch, its quaint carvings, and the like. Their talk was interesting meanwhile; but it was not on the things they went to see; and a listener might have heard, "Madame Dufour," "Clara Bell," "forgery," "actress;" "clever escape," "known bad character," uttered more than once But it came at last to a conclusion, the gentleman saying warmly,

"But after all, miss, you have been the cleverer of the two," as they turned up the lane to the vicarage, to dress for dinner—and Madame Dufour.

Exactly at the half-hour she came; lovelier, more entrancing than ever, thought Walter, as he flew into the hall to receive her. He brought her into the room, leaning on his arm, his poor foolish heart bounding with pride and joy. Kate and his as yet unannulled engagement with her were alike forgotten, as he led his queen, his saint, his idol, to his mother; and it was with difficult that he prevented himself from saying out before them all, "Mother, take her to your heart; she is your daughter!"

He did, however, hold his peace, and only Kate read him clearly, and shrugged her shoulders over the words.

Graceful and soft were the few sentences said, in her slow, half-lisping voice, by the fair-faced stranger to Mrs. Drummond, who received them awkwardly, half-timidly, as if conscious of the storm that was brewing. And then she turned to the vicar, and made the old man's eyes sparkle with the caressing charm she threw into such an ordinary salutation as that of a guest to her host on entering. To Kate she bowed with a pretty little air of triumph, and glanced hastily at the back of the gentleman from London, standing slightly apart and in the shadow.

"I think there is some one here who knows you," then said Kate Hyslop, slowly, "Mr. Plumstead, you know this lady, I think?"

The gentleman from London turned quickly round.

"An unexpected meeting, Miss Clara Bell," he said with a cruel laugh, and tapped her expressively on her shoulder.

One fleeting spasm of fear and agony transfigured her loveliness to horror as he spoke—a wild, terrified, hunted look; just the failing of a moment—and then the candid blue eyes looked up straight into his, the sweet, small mouth quivered into its usual half shy, half-plaintive smile, the graceful body swept a long, low courtesy, and the silvery voice said smoothly, "You are under some mistake, sir. My name is Madame Dufour—Caroline Dufour—and I have not the honor to know you."

"Game to the last, I see!" laughed Mr. Plumstead coarsely. "But the day of reckoning is come, my lady, and your fine airs go for nothing. You have been wanted for some time, you know, for that little mistake you made about young Charlie Lawson's name to that cheque you presented. By the look of things, I'm afraid we sha'n't get much out of the fire there," he added, in a kind of aside; "and now I've found you, I don't mean to let you go again, I promise you. You have no right to complain; you have had a pretty long innings, all things considered."

"Walter! kill him!" shrieked Madame Dufour, turning wildly to her young lover. She had no need to urge him. Already his hands were twisted in the neckcloth of the detective, when, quick as thought, Mr. Plumstead drew a truncheon from his pocket, and gave the boy a blow that rendered further interference from him impossible.

"My boy! my boy! You have killed him!" cried the miserable woman, flinging herself on her knees beside him. "Walter! look up! speak to me! Brave, good, innocent boy, speak to me once again!" she kept on repeating, while sobs without tears—those terrible sobs of fear mingled with anguish—shook her whole frame, as she crouched close to the pale face, kissing it wildly.

"Insolent! abandoned!" said Kate in deep tones, striking her hands from Walter's face. "Your place is not there."

"Ah! but I loved him!" pleaded Madame Dufour with unconscious pathos. "Whatever I may be, I loved him!"

"Take her away," said Kate sternly. "She has stood between us long enough."

"They shall not take me!" she screamed; but Mr. Plumstead bent over her quickly; and, before she well knew that he had taken her hands in his, he had slipped on a pair of handcuffs, and had her at his mercy.

"Loosen his cravat, throw water in his face, and keep him quiet when he recovers; and don't fret, madam," to the poor mother who was weeping violently on the other side, said the detective, as he prepared to pass out, leaving them with the boy lying as if dead on the floor with no more apparent concern than if he had knocked over a rabbit. It was all in the way of his profession—merely a unit in his averages—and he knew he had not killed him.

"Now, then, my beauty," he laughed, turning to the poor wretch alternately cowering and raving in his grasp, 'to your house, if you please; and then we will get our little business settled."

So he passed out through the village, so far consenting to appearances as to cover with a shawl the golden head that had so lately borne itself in triumph, and which was now so bitterly abased, and to conceal the cruel handcuffs that shone among the bracelets on her wrists. She was a prize worth taking, and he was pleased with his day's work.

Years passed, and Kate Hyslop, for all her money and unrelaxing determination to marry Walter, was Kate Hyslop still, and the terror of Hinton society, which she ruled with a rod of iron, and kept in the way of virtue by a severity that knew no moment of weakness, and a vigilance that never relaxed. And Walter Drummond, a sad, grave man, prematurely old, and always bearing that heartbreak of his about him, was living in London in an isolated, miserable fashion enough, seeming to have little to do with life any way, and to have parted forever with happiness and hope. His father and mother were dead, and he had made no new friends. The only interest he took in anything was in prisons and reformatories. These he visited constantly; constantly, too, wandered about the lower haunts of poverty and vice; or, suddenly changing his method, he would roam about the park and the fashionable squares, always searching, always hoping, and ever pursuing what he never overtook. His search became a kind of monomania with him; but he never saw again the woman he sought, though day by day he said to himself—now the moment had surely come, he would find her to-day; and when he had found her, he would take her to his heart lovingly, reverently, as of old, and in his love he would cleanse her of her stains. He never thought how time would have treated her. He looked for the golden hair, the fair flower-face, the sweet, shy smile of the early days; and once, when he gave a gray-haired, haggard, broken-down beggar-woman half-a-crown in the street, he did not know why she touched his heart so sadly, or why she woke a chord that vibrated in remembrance, but that had no echo in recognition.

At last, one bitter winter's night, he died. He had wandered restlessly all the day, feeling so near and yet so far off, as if her form was walking with him side by side, step for step, as he paced the long streets for hours; but he could not see her face, nor touch her hand, nor hear her voice. When the night fell he crept back to his miserable home, once more disappointed and his mission unfulfilled. His heart broke at last; and when they came to rouse him in the morning, he was dead.

As they laid the poor worn body straight and fair for its last rest, they found suspended round his neck a locket in which was a long tress of golden hair, a date, a monogram, and "Forever," underneath. And when a wretched beggar-woman died of drink and privation in a police-cell, that same winter, they found on her, too, wrapped in a worn bit of paper that had once been pink and stamped in gold, a short, crisp, chestnut curl, and "Walter," with the same date as his written within; while a trembling hand, of evidently later days, had scrawled in unsteady characters across, "My only real love. God bless him!"

A New Jersey Legend.

About one hundred and fifty years ago a small company of the sect called Rogerenes settled and built a village on the southwestern border of Lake Hopatcong, which lies between the counties of Morris and Sussex in the northern part of New Jersey. A cemetery containing gravestones, with legible inscriptions, still remains. The daughter of one of these Rogerenes, named Bishop, fell in love with an enterprising Rogerene youth. She was beautiful and young, and the love was reciprocated. But an Indian chief, Black Hawk, also fell in love with Marie—for such was the girl's name—and was jealous of the young man. One night Marie and her lover went sailing on the lake. They came to what is now called Bishop's Rock, and there remained for several hours, when the girl, noticing how fast the time was passing, proposed that they should return home. The young man rose up accordingly, but had no sooner gained his feet than he suddenly threw up his arms and fell forward on his face. At the same instant Black Hawk leaped from the bushes, scalping-knife in hand. As he bent over her lover, Marie, rendered frantic by the extremity of the danger, sprang at the Indian, and with one frantic push, sent him headlong over the rock.

His brains were scattered upon the stones below, upon which he fell. The lover was carried safely back to the Rogerene village; was coaxed back to life by the faithful Marie, and the pair were at length united in a happy marriage. Their lives were long and peaceful; and when, in the lapse of years, Marie was about to pass away forever, her thought reverted to the early days; her mind was filled with a longing to see her childhood's home; as that was impossible, she caused her friends to promise to bury her where her heroic deed had been accomplished. They promised, but after her death it was not fulfilled. The spirit, however, could not rest, and every moonlight night throughout the warm months of the year, as the tale runs, may be seen, between the hours of ten and eleven, the ghost of a beautiful young lady.

The story concludes in this manner: Everybody is not fortunate enough to see this vision, but all who do, it is said, may look for certain success and great happiness in their matrimonial ventures. Many young couples often watch off the rock, between the hours aforesaid, in order to see the apparition.

TWO NEW YEAR'S DAYS.

I.

"You seem very cold; will you share my rug?"

So our conversation opened. I was cold, but I declined the offer, drew my shawl closer around me, and shrunk up into the corner of the old coach, an evident object of interest to my only fellow traveller, a young man whom I had set down at the first glance as a naval officer. It was New Year's Day, a fact I had scarcely recollected until it was recalled to my mind by my companion's next remark, made as he drew his head in from the window after opening it to take a glimpse at the winter landscape.

"The snow is getting most inconveniently deep," he said. "The new year meets with a cold reception; a different one awaits us at our journey's end, I hope, though I much doubt my reaching my destination to-night. You have not much farther to travel, perhaps?"

"I ought to reach it at eight o'clock," was my reply, given in a tone so discouraging to farther parley, that my friend retired into his corner, drew his rug around him, pulled down his travelling cap over his ears, and prepared to doze, leaving me to my own thoughts, while the poor horses dragged their weary way over the deepening snow, and the leaden sky grew darker and darker.

No one had wished me a happy New Year, and it would almost seem a mockery if they had. The old year had robbed me of all that I held dearest. My father had died abroad, where he had gone with his regiment. My mother had been in ill health when he left her, and the shock of his death had hastened her end. The early winter saw me an orphan. My mother's family had never approved of her marriage with my father, as he had no private means whatever. He had been gazetted a major the very week of his death. Just when my mother and I were rejoicing over the intelligence, he must have died.

I had received a very good education, and most thankful I was that this enabled me to strike out a path for myself. My mother's aunt, Lady Goldney (her husband had been an Indian judge), wanted me to be her companion, but I knew too much of her to covet such a life. My mother's relations had neglected her, let her want many a luxury in those last few months that they could have supplied without any self-denial. *That* I could not forget, and recollecting it, declined any favor at their hands, shocking them by declaring my firm intention to seek my living as a governess. They immediately, as they termed it, wiped their hands of me, and I went to father's only brother's to remain until I could succeed in obtaining a suitable situation. My uncle was a country clergyman, bringing up a large family on a very limited income. I had not been with them long when I heard of something that seemed likely to suit me exactly. A distant connection of my aunt's was seeking a governess for her only child, a girl of thirteen. She was charmed to get one whom she could receive as a member of the family. It was a long way from all my associations, but they were so saddened now that this seemed only a recommendation.

I set off in the early morning, dressing by the flickering light of one candle, my appetite refusing the substantial meal my aunt had hospitably prepared for me. I had seen very little of my relatives until they had come to me in my sore trouble, but they had been so considerate and kind that to bid them good-bye opened the wound afresh. I was very young—scarcely eighteen; to be thrown among strangers was a great trial. My uncle wished to give me five pounds, but I would not take it, so I set off for my new duties with a very light pocket and a heavy heart. The words of my fellow-traveller had sent a chilly fear into my heart. Suppose the coach had to stop on the road, and I be obliged to pay for bed and board, how would my scanty store hold out? All sorts of fears and surmises crowded into my mind. How should I be received if I came to Morton Manor late at night, or not at all on the day I was expected? Then I wondered whether Mrs. Morton would think me young and giddy, a fear arising from my uncle's last words that very morning:

"Good-bye Ethel," he had said; "you are a deal too young and pretty to be a governess—more fit to be in the schoolroom yourself. Mind, if you are at all uncomfortable come back to us, my child. Poor Hugh's daughter will always have a welcome at my hearth."

The compliment that in brighter days would have been dangerously pleasing, was to me then but a cause of pain. And, as I sat back in that old coach, I recalled with pleasure the fact that in height I was much above the average; though my figure was slight and girlish, I overlooked that, and congratulated myself that, with my golden hair packed tightly behind my ears in a mass of tresses that would show above my head, I looked at least twenty. I am old now, and what beauty I had has long since faded away, so you will not think me vain if I tell you that at eighteen I was beautiful. What made my beauty rare was that my eyes were of a full, deep blue, shaded by eyelashes which, with my eyebrows, were shades darker than my hair. After all, beauty is God's gift, and may be used or abused like every other good thing.

My fellow-traveller and I were presently aroused by the coach stopping, and in a few minutes the guard opened the door and announced a fact that was now self-evident. The clouds were blowing off and it was beginning to freeze.

"Must stop here, sir," he said, "for two hours, to get the horses roughed. The smith is out of the way, so we are obliged to wait until he comes back."

I was the only lady passenger—indeed, the only one at all besides my friend in the corner. At the sound of the guard's voice he rubbed his eyes, yawned, and looked about him, then stepped out, and, as I thought, was going to leave me to myself. Presently, he returned, with rather a rueful expression on his face, and said:

"I think, Miss Peel, you will find the room yonder more pleasant than this," pointing to the window through which the ruddy glow of a blazing fire fell on the snow. "It is not quite the most desirable place in the world for a lady, but, at any rate, it is warm."

I hesitated; but he rejoined, half testily: "You had better make the best of it. You will be frozen here long before we are ready to start again."

I felt that he only spoke the truth, and gladly availed myself of his proffered arm to steady my trembling footsteps on the slippery ground, for I was faint and giddy with my long fast. Once in the warm kitchen, with the clatter of voices, the smell of stale tobacco and spirit, a mist stole over my eyes, and sinking into the corner of the old-fashioned settle, I lost all consciousness. I suppose there must have been a great commotion, but, happily for me, I knew nothing until I found myself lying on a bed, and a kind, motherly old woman pouring strong brandy-and-water down my throat. I soon recovered myself, and after I had had tea, paid the old woman her very moderate charge, and heard that we should reach Morton before midnight, I was quite myself again.

The old lady remained chatting with me for a little while, and gave me the startling piece of intelligence that my fellow-traveller was Mrs. Morton's only brother, who had just returned from a long voyage.

"And he has been asking for you, miss," she said: "I thought you must be old friends, he carried you up-stairs so tender like."

Oh, I thought, what will he think of me, so churlish all the journey, and so weak-minded now. I threw myself back on the bed, and in the midst of my conjectures fell asleep, and dreamed that Mrs. Morton was turning me away in the middle of the night, without any money or clothes; from which disagreeable employment I was aroused by a candle being brought into the room, and the hostess awaking me by saying that the horses were being put to.

We were soon on our journey again; and, with my heart throbbing in my throat, I prepared to make some apology to Mr. Felton for the trouble I had given him. But directly he had taken his place, he said:

"I am so glad you are all right again. I was very sorry for you, and frightened too; but this cold is enough to kill any one."

I thanked him, and proceeded to say that I was on my way to Morton Manor to take charge of a little girl who, from what I had just heard, must be his niece.

He started as though very much surprised, but recovering himself, he rejoined, with a short laugh:

"It is a case of mistaken identity, Miss Peel. Seeing your name on your luggage, I jumped to the conclusion that you were the only daughter of one of my father's oldest friends, Captain Peel, who was good enough to show me a tiny oil-painting which his wife had sent out to him of his 'little Ethel,' as he called her. You bear a strange resemblance to the picture. I did not think I could be mistaken in the eyes. She had a rich aunt—Lady Somebody or other—who was likely to introduce her well, I was told. You must surely be some connection?"

"Why not the original?" I asked, gulping down the sob that rose in my throat as the old happy days crowded back on my memory. "I am Ethel Peel," I hurried on, "the only daughter of Major Peel: so far you have made no mistake; but I am afraid my aunt, Lady Goldney, is unlikely to introduce me much, as she is a chronic invalid."

He gave a glance at my deep mourning, and holding out his hand, exclaimed—

"Do forgive me, I must have pained you. I shall not easily forgive myself; but I have been away from all home news for many months."

I took his hand, and he grasped mine warmly, saying, as he did so—

"I am sure you will like Pet, if she is at all what she was three years ago; and Emily will be a true friend to you. She is a little brusque—our Scotch blood, you know—but as true as steel."

So we chatted on, or rather he did, until the coach stopped at the lodge of Morton Manor. There was a long approach, and we had to walk. A man was waiting to receive me, and carry my luggage. He seemed delighted to see Mr. Felton.

We were soon at the old-fashioned house and in the cheerful dining-room, where a bright fire blazed on the hearth, and Christmas fare was spread on the table. I can recall the scene distinctly now, though it was more than fifty years ago, even to the very holly berries that glistened against the oaken panel. Yes, that New Year's Day was the most eventful of my life, because it introduced me to Horace Felton.

I was quite bewildered in the hubbub that greeted his arrival among them. He was kissed and hugged by his sister, while her husband asked him fifty questions, as to how he had come so unexpectedly, why he had not written to them, all in a breath; and the two large dogs barked and jumped around him; and a sweet-looking child added to the confusion by her merry laugh and cries of delight. All this, you must know, took but a minute, as I stood behind unnoticed. Immediately he could disengage himself from his sister's hugs, Horace turned to me and said—

"Allow me, Emily, to introduce you to Miss Peel."

She gave me a perplexed look for an instant, then warmly shaking hands, exclaimed—

"Oh, ten thousand pardons! Here we have been waiting, my dear, for the last four hours to give you a warm welcome, and yet never to have spoken to you all this time! You must forgive us; this young man's sudden appearance has turned our heads. You came together? Well, that was pleasant, just in time to wish us a "Happy New Year!" We were afraid you would not come until another day had begun. You must be frozen. Pet, take Miss Peel up to her room and bring her down again quickly to have some supper."

And then I was shown to a comfortable room with a blazing fire. The heat made my face glow, and the excitement made my eyes sparkle, until I scarcely knew myself. But my beauty gave me no pleasure; would Mrs. Morton think me too pretty for a governess? After a merry but hasty meal, I found myself once more in my own room. Mrs. Morton, coming to my door, kissed me affectionately, hoped I should sleep well, and told me not to get up until I was called.

So ended my first New Year's Day. As I laid my head on my pillow, I tried to pierce the veil that hid the future from my view. What of joy or sorrow lay before me in the untried days? So much warm-hearted kindness had won my heart; and I already loved Mrs. Morton as though I had known her all my life.

II.

The day was what some people call "well aired" before I made my appearance downstairs. The beautiful view from my window over the park, where the trees, laden with snow, sparkled in the bright sun, and the clear frosty air, exhilarating and bracing, made me feel happy and at home.

The morning passed rapidly in arranging lessons for the next day, and in unpacking. I did not meet Horace Felton until lunch. He sat next me, and chatted incessantly. I forgot I was the governess and not the guest. The fact was recalled to me when he said—

"Do come out and skate this afternoon. The ice bears beautifully, and there are a lot of people coming from Hexham."

I was going to answer affirmatively, but recollected that my time was not my own, and appealed to Mrs. Morton. He interrupted our conversation by urging that in consideration of his being at home, Pet should have another week's holiday. "And then," he said, "we shall be able to show Miss Peel a little of the neighborhood before she gets into harness."

Mrs. Morton good-naturedly assented, and Pet went into ecstasies of delight.

"It is such a strange coincidence, Miss Peel, that your father and mine should have been such friends," said Mrs. Morton. "Horace has just been telling me that he recognized you from a portrait he saw a few years since."

So began the happiest week of my life. Horace, Pet and I were constantly together. Mrs. Morton was obliged to remain in the house a great deal, as her husband was suffering from an attack of gout, and as he did not approve of solitary confinement, she had to be with him. I look back on that week now, and do not wonder that it was so happy. Horace Felton was then about thirty, tall and well made, with clear, truthful blue eyes, and crisp, curling, dark-brown hair; full of fun and good-nature. He had seen the greater part of the world in his travels, and had a fund of amusing stories.

The frozen pond was on Mr. Morton's estate, about half a mile from the house. The first afternoon we went down Mrs. Morton was with us, as it was the public day. As we walked across the ice, Horace Felton was at my side, and I heard a young man—short, thick-set, with a great deal of sandy hair—ask, "Who is that girl with Horace Felton?"

I saw a curl on Horace Felton's lip, but he made no remark. Presently we reached an island in the middle of the pond where Mrs. Morton and Pet kept their skates. Several people came up to shake hands and wish Mrs. Morton the compliments of the season, and among them the gentleman with the sandy hair, who asked to be introduced to me. Mrs. Morton seemed much pleased, saying—

"Miss Peel's father, Major Peel, was an intimate friend of my father's. She is likely to be with us some time."

How long he would have remained at my side, gazing at me with those dreadful green eyes, I cannot tell; but seeing Horace at a little distance, helping Pet with her skates, I gave him an imploring glance, which had the desired effect, and brought him to my side, when the gentleman lifted his hat and moved off.

"You do not know our local celebrities yet," Horace said; "that gentleman is the richest man within a circuit of fifty miles. He has a splendid place called the Grange, and no wife."

The way the last clause was repeated made me color and feel uncomfortable; but soon all disagreeables were forgotten. Mrs. Morton lent me her skates, and I was thoroughly at home in them. Pet, Horace and I skimmed along, the cold air dyeing our cheeks with ruby.

I do not know how it was, but from that afternoon I felt that Horace Felton cared for me. Day after day the conviction grew, until it only wanted spoken words to render it a certainty. On the ice, or driving about to the different places of interest in the neighborhood, Pet, Horace and I were always together. In the evening I played his accompaniments, or we sang duets together, or played a rubber of whist to amuse Mr. Morton and make him forget his gout.

So the week's holiday passed. The last day Pet had a few young friends to spend the afternoon with her. The ice still bore, and we repaired to take our pastime as usual, for the first time without Horace as an escort. Mrs. Morton had begged him as a particular favor to go with her husband for a drive.

It was getting late, and we were thinking of returning, when I saw him at the further end of the pond. He joined us, and saying that, as it would be light for another hour, I had better let the children enjoy the ice while they might with safety, as he believed a thaw would set in very soon, he added,

"And you come with me; I want to show you the lichen I told you of last evening."

He helped me to unfasten my skates, and the path being very slippery, he gave me his arm. I chatted away as usual, but he was silent. We reached the stone, and I examined the curious lichen that grew on it. He broke off a piece, and asked, half-laughing, half in earnest.

"If I were to give you this, would you keep it for my sake?"

I replied much in the same tone, and opening a little case that I carried in my pocket, held it out for him to drop the lichen in. He did so, and taking both my hands in his, held them, while he looked earnestly into my face, saying—

"I would give anything I possess, Ethel, to know whether you care for me. I have told you that I saw your likeness in India, but not that those sweet eyes stole my heart away, and that when we met, and I found that you were not only the most beautiful woman I ever saw, but as good as you are beautiful, I have had but one wish—to call you mine."

His arm was around my waist, and he had kissed me passionately before I had any time to comprehend the full meaning of his words. At that very moment a footfall sounded behind me, and, to my surprise and confusion, there stood Mrs. Morton. Could she have heard those words? Had she seen it all? Her color was slightly heightened, and her lips compressed, but her manner was perfectly calm. I dared not glance at Horace. I felt that my cheeks were crimson and my manner unnatural. I was thankful when she put her arm within her brother's, and said, in a perfectly unconstrained voice—

"Horace and I will prolong our walk, Miss Peel: we have seen very little of each other lately. Will you kindly take the children home at once, and give them some tea? I shall not see them until after dinner."

I walked back as one in a dream. He had told me that he loved me. Whether I loved him was a question I had no need to ask myself. I was happier than I had been for many months. I should be no more alone. There would be some one to care for me, some one to whom I could cling. Again and again I looked at the precious lichen. It seemed a something tangible to assure me that my new-found bliss was indeed a reality. I pictured to myself how in that long walk, he would tell his sister the whole story, and I believed she would fully enter into my happiness. She had treated me so completely as a friend, that I could not but hope she would be glad to receive me as a sister. Whether he was well enough off to marry was a question that had never occured to me.

I dressed for the evening with a care I had never taken before. One golden curl I allowed to escape, and it hung on my black dress, which was brightened by a piece of scarlet geranium. I played with the children until they left, listening with palpitating heart for every footfall; longing yet dreading to see him open the door and come in. How little I imagined then the weary years that would come and go before Horace Felton and I met again!

When at last I found myself in the drawing-room, no Horace was to be seen. I fancied I detected an amused expression on Mrs. Morton's face as her eye rested on my long curl, and the bright flower in my dress. I was miserably ill at ease. Why was not Horace there to explain to his sister why she had found me in such an equivocal position; or if he had already told her of his declaration, why did she not allude to it.

After a little conversation on indifferent subjects, she began—

"I suppose Horace told you that he was going to Hexham for a few days? My husband had arranged to dine at Lord Paverley's to-night, so he drove him over."

I felt the color leave my lips, and a mist float before my eyes. I made a desperate effort to regain my self-possession, and replied in the negative.

I thought that weary evening's *tête-à-tête* would never end. Mrs. Morton really exerted herself to set me at my ease, and ended by asking me to practice some duets with her. At length I was alone in my own room. What could it mean? Those words of his still sounded in my ear, and I could feel his warm embrace. Had he been trifling with me? No: it could not be. I banished the odious thought at once. He was too generous, too thoroughly a gentleman to allow that to be possible. Then why had he left without one word of further explanation? I consoled myself by believing that the next day would bring a letter which would clear up all misunderstanding, and fell asleep to dream of those words, and that look of love which I flattered myself could but be sincere.

Two days passed, and twice two days, but still Horace neither came nor wrote. There was an indescribable something in Mrs. Morton's manner which told me she had seen and heard everything: but that she disapproved was equally evident from her silence.

Those were miserable days, but they were lightened by some small portion of hope.

There was a darker time coming. He had been away a week, when a letter was brought in while we were at breakfast. Pet immediately declared that it was from Uncle Horace. I watched Mrs. Morton's face as she read line after line, her lips tightening and her cheek paling. She never spoke a word for a few seconds after she had refolded the letter and laid it by her plate. Then she drank some tea, and tried in vain to command her voice, but it trembled, and her tears would flow, as she said to her husband—

"Horace has another appointment; he leaves England for Australia next week. He will not come back here again, as he says he has business which will keep him in London until he sails. He talks of giving up the navy after this voyage, and settling somewhere abroad. It is so sudden; no one can tell when we may meet him again!"

I cannot describe to you what were my feelings. Grief, disappointment, injured pride, all struggled for the first place in my wounded heart. Was there no message for me? Better there had been none for my peace of mind than the heartless one I received. "Horace desires to be remembered to you, Miss Peel, and bids me tell you that he supposes that long before you and he have the opportunity again of wishing each other a 'Happy New Year', you will be a Mrs. Somebody or other."

It was so cold, so heartless, so impudent, that my pride came to my rescue. I *would* forget him. I should not have to meet him for some years at least; that would help me. But I did love him so sincerely. To believe he loved me had been so sweet. Mrs. Morton felt her brother's sudden departure acutely. She was certainly very kind to me, treating me quite as a younger sister. She could not hear from him for many months, and by a sort of tacit understanding, his name was never mentioned. It was a hard lesson to learn, at eighteen, of the faithlessness of men, and I took it thoroughly to heart. I was young, and healthy in mind and body, so it did not kill me or make me melancholy; but it did what was perhaps worse morally, it made me a cynic.

Mrs. Morton was at no pains to conceal her desire to see me married. Mr. Gainsford, the gentleman whose attentions on the ice that first afternoon had annoyed me so much, was a constant visitor at the Manor. In vain, when I knew he was in the house, I tried to keep in my school-room out of his way; Mrs. Morton would always manage to bring him in for some excuse, and try to leave us alone; but that I would never allow. At last she confided to me that he had told her long since that he had fallen in love with me at first sight; that, though I was penniless, I was a lady, and should grace the head of his table, and that she had promised to help on his suit. She represented to me, as powerfully as she could, the glories and honors of the Grange contrasted with the lonely life of a governess, particularly when I should find myself obliged to seek a situation among strangers. I could not let her give my wealthy suitor any encouragement while there still lingered in my heart the hope that, after all, something might arise to prove that Horace was not so false as circumstances made him appear.

Twelve months passed. Mr. Gainsford had proposed and been rejected, much to Mrs. Morton's displeasure. But nothing daunted, he had declared his intention to wait one, two, three years—indeed, till I was actually engaged to some one else. I suppose it was the first time his will had ever been thwarted; so that added zest to his courtship. Then came a letter from Horace. He had obtained his discharge from the navy, and was going to begin life as a colonist. No word for me, though Pet was remembered, and even indifferent friends. "I shall look out for a rich wife," he said; and as I heard this, my mind was made up. He had done all in his power to prove to me that he had only regarded me in the light of a toy, to play with for one hour, to be cast aside and forgotten the next. I would now take my life in my own hands. I should never love again in that romantic way, as I now called it; I would do the next best thing—marry Mr. Gainsford, and try to love him out of gratitude. I knew our tastes differed, that we were utterly uncongenial, that he was only a gentleman in so much as money and social position could make him one; and yet, knowing all this, I resolved to accept him, to spend the rest of my life with him. What short-sighted things we do to gratify our pride and pique! And how I hated myself when, a few days after this, I allowed myself to become engaged to Mr. Gainsford!

He pressed me to name an early day for the marriage; but for that I was not prepared, and only consented to the engagement on the condition that it should last for one year at least.

III.

Ten years! Does that seem a long time to drop the thread of my story? Well, it is New Year's Day again. Do you recollect the circumstances of this time ten years ago? My friends were few, and I very poor. I am rich now; but at the time I would recommence my story, I am Ethel Peel still. I have my own maid, and my uncle's personage is supplied with all needful luxuries with my money. I am dressing for a dinner-party, and I am to meet Horace Felton. Yes, after all these years we are to meet again. But on what terms? This evening will decide. Meanwhile I will gather up a few of the missing links to connect the chain of my story.

I had only been engaged to Mr. Gainsford a month when I was summoned to what, it was feared, would prove my Uncle's death-bed. He wished to bid me good-bye, and to know that my aunt had some one to comfort her when he was gone, all my cousins being boys. Of course I went at once. How merciful is the Providence that overrules the events of our lives, that stretches out a hand to turn us from the slippery paths that we, in our wilfulness or blindness, choose! I have often since looked back, and shuddered at the life I was so nearly taking for my own.

My uncle got better; and in the sweet, unworldly atmosphere of a good man's home, I saw what I had done in its true light and repulsiveness. I told my aunt my story. It was a great relief to have her sympathy and counsel. She with difficulty obtained my permission to relate the entire facts of the case to my uncle, and very much, I felt, I must have fallen in his estimation. He most decidedly advised me to write at once to Mr. Gainsford, telling him honestly how impossible I found it to give my heart, and beg to be released from my engagement, returning the few presents I had received from him.

He was not easily got rid of; and I felt I had behaved so badly to him in the end, that had not my uncle remained firm in his command that I should decidedly put an end to all communication with him, I should have relented, in the hope of making some atonement for my selfishness. He pointed out to me that a marriage such as I contemplated with a man whom I did not love, and no good person could esteem, was unholy in God's sight, and must bring misery in the end. I do not think Mrs. Morton could have known so much of Mr. Gainsford's character as we afterward learned, or she certainly would not have helped on our engagement as she did. At last it became a thing of the past; and two years afterward we heard that he had married a very young girl, at the end of a month's courtship. Of course I did not return to the Manor. Pet had another governess, and I another situation. I did not fill it long, as my Aunt Goldney's lingering malady took a more fatal form. She begged me to come to her, and I felt I should be selfish to refuse. Reluctantly I went; but when once there I was able to fulfil my duty cheerfully. When she died I found, to my surprise, that she had left me nearly a thousand a year. I at once returned to my uncle's, and made arrangements to live with him.

With youth, beauty, and wealth, you will not be surprised if I tell you I had many suitors; but I distrusted them all. It was my money they wanted, not me. So the years glided away, and I was Ethel Peel still. My uncle was now very old, my cousins making their way in the world as large families generally manage to do, and I creating fresh interests for myself, when a new color was given to my life.

Pet had married very early, and had become a handsome little matron, writing to me from time to time long epistles full of the praises of her two children. We had met once or twice since I left Morton Manor, but not one word had I heard of Horace Felton, until six months before this, my second New Year's Day, when Pet wrote to tell me that her Uncle Horace was coming home; I must recollect him (as if I were likely to forget). He was sent for to take possession of a large estate left him by his uncle, who had died childless. "We are full of curiosity to see him," she wrote; "and we hope the meeting will cheer my mother. She has been sadly out of health since my father's death." It was thus I heard of his return to England. Was he married? Should we ever meet again?

Mrs. Morton and I rarely corresponded; so it was with some surprise that, a few months after I had heard from Pet, I received a lengthy epistle from her. I will not trouble you with the whole of it, but will give you the substance as shortly as possible.

Horace was coming home, unmarried. That afternoon long ago she had seen the confirmation of her fears, that an attachment had sprung up between her brother and me, and had resolved, if possible, to put an end to it, knowing that he had nothing beyond his profession, and that all chance of future prosperity depended on his keeping upon good terms with his uncle, who would have been irretrievably offended by an imprudent marriage. All this she represented to him during their walk; but without effect. He loved me, and believed I loved him, and cared for nothing else. We could wait. Then she showed him another aspect of the affair. I was very poor, must go on getting my living as a governess for the next three years at least, before he would be at all in a position to marry, and then with only a narrow income to depend on indefinitely, while there was Mr. Gainsford willing, she knew, to marry me at once. I was very young, did not know my own mind; that in our relative positions he would be acting very selfishly to bind me by any engagement. He replied, that if he remained where I was he must claim me; he could not help himself. Then she advised him to go away for a time, leaving it to her tact to set matters right with me. He trusted her, little thinking the part she would play, for his good, as she imagined. Her surmise with regard to Mr. Gainsford was verified by his making her his confidante. She at once wrote to Horace as though the whole affair was settled, and hence the cruel misunderstanding and separation of years. She had never guessed at the depth of her brother's love for me, or she would not have acted as she did. She regarded it merely as a passing fancy for a pretty girl, of which he might easily be cured to the advantage of both. But when she found how serious a matter it was, she deeply repented the course she had taken; but only discovered her mistake when it was too late to repair the injury she had done. She found that her brother's was a nature that could love but once. He wrote at rare intervals; and my name was never mentioned. Mrs. Morton wrote now to beg me to forgive her, and to prove that I did so by coming to spend a few months with her. That, I unhesitatingly refused to do; at the same time assuring her of my full forgiveness, and in return asking one favor—that she would not tell Horace of my altered fortunes. Not that I feared he would turn fortune-hunter, but that pride might now keep him from me, as I heard that his uncle had left the estate heavily mortgaged.

Now I have brought you up to my second New Year's Day; Horace within twenty miles of me. We met at the house of a mutual friend. He did not know I was to be there; so I had the advantage over him. You will easily imagine mine was no careless toilette that evening. Something of that first early bloom of beauty was gone. Twenty-nine has not all the charms of nineteen. But my friends told me I was altered wonderfully little; my hair a shade less golden, and my figure not so slim and girlish, you can just understand the difference. The fashions of forty years ago would not convey a pleasing impression to you now; but I may tell you that my dress was of rich blue silk, pale sky-blue, trimmed with white lace; and I wore handsome pearl ornaments of my Aunt Goldney's.

It was New Year's Day. I had not forgotten that now; and I received the good wishes of the season with a very pleasant conviction that much that was sweet awaited me in the future. I was the first to arrive; and when Horace came into the room, I was sitting where I could see him without his seeing me. Could it be ten years since we had met? The same honest, manly face, so little changed, scarcely aged a day. I fancy people who are in health do not alter much from thirty to forty. In a few minutes he was at my side, and we were being introduced as strangers. "Mr. Felton, a very old friend of mine just come from Australia, knows some friends of yours, he tells me, Miss Peel," said my host.

Our eyes met. I do not know how or why it was, but in that one glance we seemed mutually to understand each other. He took the seat next me, and led me in to dinner. We were not very talkative for awhile. At last he said—"I heard from Emily that you were with your uncle, and thought that my best chance of meeting you was to come up and stay with the people who were to have brought me here to-night. They are kept at home with colds, and urged me to bring their excuses. I only landed three days ago, and had not hoped to have met you so soon. So strange that our first meeting should have been on a New Year's Day, and our reunion on the very same day. May I say reunion?"

I do not think I made any reply; but my silence seemed to satisfy him. So we met after all those weary years. There was very little to explain when he came to me at my uncle's. Emily had been beforehand. She had kept her promise with regard to not mentioning my Aunt Goldney's will. I was able to do that myself when he was lamenting that he feared, from what his solicitors told him, we should be obliged to live carefully for a few years if we wished to pay off the mortgages on the estate. Then I told him of my money; and the principal, which was entirely in my own control, proved to be amply sufficient to get rid of all obligations. We were married after a very short engagement. My first present was a tiny locket. It contained a piece of faded lichen.

Many New Year's Days have come and gone since those two eventful ones of which I have written; but they have left their impress on all the others. I am old now, and but a few more New Years at most can be mine; but the experience of a long life has taught me that we must expect lights and shadows to fall across our path. Does to-day bode evil, to-morrow may bring the good. To few, very few indeed, is it given to walk altogether in the shade.

NEWS OF THE WEEK.

Affairs in Spain are still so quiet under the Republican *regime* as to strengthen confidence in the belief that it indicates the stability of the new order of things rather than the ominous calm preceding a storm, as Monarchists assert. If such be in reality impending, it certainly as yet casts no shadows in advance.

The Government elected by the Cortes is as follows:

Figueras, for President of the Council, received 244 votes.

Cordova, Minister of War, 239 votes.

Pi y Margall, Minister of the Interior, 243 votes.

Nicolas Salmeron, Minister of Justice, 242 votes.

Francisco Salmeron, Minister of the Colonies, 238 votes.

Beranger, Minister of Marine, 246 votes.

Castelar, Minister of Foreign Affairs, 245 votes.

Becerra, Minister of Public Works, 233 votes.

Echegaray, Minister of Finances, 242 votes.

Among the measures contemplated by the Ministry are the separation of Church and State, and the appointment of judges for life. The Government intends to suppress the Ministries of Colonies, Justice and Public Works, and to abolish the system of retiring on pensions officials unless over sixty years of age. The suppression of the Royal Guard has been ordered. The flag of the Republic will be violet, white and red.

It is said that the present winter is one of the mildest ever known upon the continent of Europe. In France, especially in the environs of Paris and in the gardens of the city, the trees are covered with leaves, and the spring flowers are beginning to bud, while in the centre of France raspberry-bushes are fruiting and early asparagus has appeared. About Vienna already the fields are full of violets, and South Germans drink their beer in the open air.

The last act in the drama of the McFarland-Richardson shooting case was enacted in Indianapolis on Friday Feb. 14. The Supreme Court of that State then decided that the divorce granted Abby Sage McFarland from her husband, Daniel McFarland, was legal, affirming the judgment of the court below. The husband was the appealing party. The marriage of Mrs. McFarland with Richardson was, therefore, legal.

Railway Accidents, from "broken rails," "misplaced switches," with their accompaniments of burning cars from overturned "stoves," or by petroleum getting into contact with fire somewhere about the train, are becoming almost daily events, and yet the old style of dangerous switches continues to be used—that most dangerous style of heating cars by stoves continues to be maintained in use—and petroleum cars continue to be attached to passenger trains.

It is stated that John W. Young, son of Brigham Young, has divorced two of his three wives, and will hereafter reside in Philadelphia.

THE GIRL OF THE PERIOD.

How She Acts in the Horse Cars.

We have sketched in the following, the Young Woman of the Period as she appears in the street car: She stands upon the curb, with a little springy, up-and-down motion, as if she had spiral springs in the soles of her gaiters. As the car approaches she sticks the point of her closed parasol in the direction of the driver with a small jerk. The car stops. She gives one or two more little springy motions before she leaves the pavement, and then dances to the car. As she ascends the step, the conductor seems to consider it absolutely necessary to her safety to place one of his hands in the small of her back, while he rings the bell with the other. She enters the car, with the spiral springs still bobbing her up and down; and, as all the seats are full, she stands holding her hands in front of her, and gazing off into illimitable space, as if the one idea which never entered her mind, and which never could enter it under any possible circumstances, is, that some man will rise and offer her his seat. But a young man in the corner *does* rise, and immediately the fellow next to him moves quickly into the corner, as if the performance of that manœuvre had formed the subject of anxious thought during many years of his life. To get a corner seat, indeed, would seem to be the chief end of man, if we remark the avidity with which human beings in street cars seek their object.

When the young man rises, the young lady suddenly becomes conscious that there is something nearer to her than the horizon, and she gives two or three more little bounces, and says: "Keep your seat!" The young man is embarrassed, and says he is going to get out soon; whereupon the fair being dances toward the seat, sinks into it, and pretends that the fact of the existence of any young man who once occupied that seat, and who is going to get out, has entirely faded out of her consciousness. She smooths down her dress and its supplemental frippery, flounces and pennants, and again looks far beyond the confines of the car into Emptiness. She knows she is expected by the other women in the car to remain unconscious of their presence while they study her clothes. They immediately begin. They stare at her dress, her sacque, her hat, her back hair, her jewelry, her gloves, her bows and ribbons, and her miscellaneous millinery, until the entire costume is photographed in their memories, and the price estimated, and a critical opinion formed, with a resolution to have a bonnet of the same kind, or a "body" cut upon the same pattern.

When the young lady thinks that this examination is concluded, she becomes conscious again, and begins to look around and see how all the other women are dressed. She examines each one in detail, and in a few moments she is in possession of all the necessary information. Presently a young man with whom she is acquainted gets into the car, and he stands clutching the strap and trying in vain to keep himself in a graceful attitude while he converses with her. All the women begin to wonder whether she cares particularly for him—and, as she knows their thoughts, she is so distant that the young man becomes more embarrassed than ever, and makes renewed struggles to maintain a graceful position. When she wishes to get out she rises, smooths down her frippery again, indulges in two or three springs, and dances along to the platform. The conductor again considers it imperatively necessary to press the small of her back. She dances down the the steps, dances to the pavement, and then dances along the street, fully aware of the fact that the women in the car have all turned round to look at her, and serenely confident in the assurance that she has on good clothes, which fit her splendidly. As she disappears the conductor turns to the man who is smoking a cigar on the platform, and remarks that she is a "crusher."—*Max Adeler.*

☞ Among the Romans, all men of full size were obliged to marry; and it is even a modern law of England which inflicts a fine upon all bachelors in the kingdom of twenty-five years and over.

☞ The late Lord Lyton left a written injunction that after death, or presumed death, his body should be allowed for three days to lie untouched upon his bed, and then should be examined by medical men, who should certify that life was extinct. This was obeyed.

A Bridal Chamber of Ice.

It was during the winter of 1740, the severest that Russia had had in a century, and it was ordered that a palace of ice should be erected on the Neva, directly opposite to where the present royal palace stands. The palace of ice was built; in one of its rooms a bridal bed, also of ice, was furnished; all the furniture was of the same material, including some cannon, which were placed before the ice palace, and out of which they were able to shoot by means of lining them with iron. It is also related, but this is happily not confirmed, that Buhren selected a number of men who had equally merited his wrath by belonging to good Russian blood, at the head of whom stood Molynski, the Finance Minister, and placed them as sentinels; that he then caused water to be thrown upon them with a hose until they became statues of ice, and thus kept them in their places

The governors of all the provinces of the land, even to the remotest, received instructions to send a number of persons of both sexes to this wedding festival. They were all clothed in new peasant dresses at the expense of the empress. This wedding procession, numbering about three hundred persons, paraded through the streets of the capital and halted before the imperial palace. Here the bridal pair was taken up, placed in a kind of a barouche, and this was mounted on the back of an elephant. Some of the guests were mounted on camels, the others riding deer, goats, oxen, bloodhounds, and even dogs.

The wedding feast was spread in Buhren's barn, and each nation was served with the peculiar dishes of its nationality. After the supper followed a ball, in which each bridal couple appeared in the dance peculiar to its province. Finally, the bridal couple were led in to their palace of ice, a salute of cannon honoring their arrival, and then laid upon their bridal bed of ice, which was furnished, however, with a quantity of pillows and covering. Watchmen were placed at the doors to prevent the newly-married couple from abandoning their cold quarters before break of the next day.

And all this was provided for the distraction of one whose weak crimes and cruelties had brought her remorse. It is said that she enjoyed it immensely.

An Alarm of Fire.

Strange Occurrence at a Concert in New Orleans.

At the last Rubinstein matinée in New Orleans, just as the pianist had seated himself to give the closing performance on the piano, a gleam of bright sunshine stole through the blinds, lighting up a portion of the parquet. At the same time there was loud talking in the building outside of the auditorium, and "Be quiet!" was spoken in thunder tones by one of the auditory. The ladies saw the intense light, heard the commanding tone, and thinking the cry of fire was raised, began to rush for the doors leading from the parquet. Some one seeing the rush, cried "Fire!" and then a scene of confusion almost indescribable ensued. Rubinstein ceased playing, turned toward the audience, sat silently looking on in amazement, and then quietly rose and walked from the stage. The rush continued in all directions, notwitstanding the assurance from some among the audience that nothing was wrong. Those in the parquet nearest the stage rushed frantically there, some of them literally leaping over the piano, and from boxes near the stage ladies were assisted to come down. The scene was one of dire confusion, but fortunately no one was injured, and shortly order and quiet was restored and the performance went on to its conclusion.

☞ There is a man who keeps a list of all the banks in the country, so as to be able to say that he keeps a bank account.

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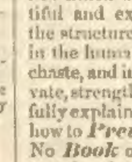

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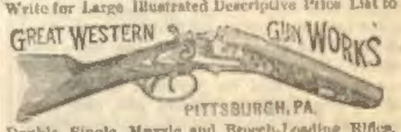

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WIT AND HUMOR.

A SUCCESSFUL DODGE.

We had a visit from a book-peddling female last week. She wished to dispose of a book. She was alone in the world, and had no one to whom she could turn for sympathy or assistance, hence we should buy her book. She was unmarried, and had no manly heart in which she could pour her sufferings; therefore we ought to invest in her book. She had received a liberal education and could talk French like a native; we could not in consequence refuse to pay her two dollars for a book. She wanted to take lessons in music from a learned German professor, consequently we must not decline buying a book. We had listened attentively, and here broke in with, "What do you say? We're deaf." She started in a loud voice and went through her rigmarole. When she had finished we went and got a roll of paper and made it into a speaking-trumpet, placed one end in our ear and told her to proceed. She nearly burst a blood-vessel in her frantic efforts to make herself heard. She commenced: "I am alone in the world." "It doesn't make the slightest difference to us. We are not alone; in fact, we are a husband and father. Although this is leap year, bigamy is not allowed in this State. We are not eligible to proposals." "Oh! what a fool this man is, she said in a low tone; then at the top of her voice, "I don't want to marry you. I want—to—sell—a—b-o-o-k!" This last sentence was howled. "We don't want a cook," we blandly remarked; "our wife does the cooking, and she wouldn't allow as good-looking a woman as you are to stay in the house five minutes. She's very jealous." She looked at us in despair. Gathering her robes about her, and giving us a glance of contempt, she exclaimed, "I do believe if a three-hundred pounder were let off alongside that blamed old deaf fool's head he'd think somebody was knocking at the door," and slung herself out and slammed the door with a vehemence that awakened our office boy, who can sleep sound enough for a whole family. When she was gone we indulged in a demoniac laugh. She isn't likely to try to sell us a book any more.—*Figaro.*

UNHAPPY EXPERIENCE OF AN AFRICAN CHIEF.

Max Adeler says: We referred some time ago to the case of the African chief who had made for him in London an umbrella with ribs forty feet long, and with a handle like a telegraph pole. The chieftain estimated that when he got that umbrella out among his native wilds, and spread it all of a sudden whenever a shower came up, he would make rival monarchs turn blue with envy and strike awe to the souls of his subjects. Well, he has been practising with it in the recesses of his native jungle for the past six months, and he is now thoroughly convinced that human happiness is likely to be an unsubstantial mockery when it is founded upon umbrellas, or upon anything else this side of the silent grave. The first time it began to rain, after the parasol arrived, the chief gave orders for the machine to be opened, so that he could walk out and enjoy himself. The task of raising the umbrella occupied two days, and by that time the weather cleared up. Then the chief commanded the umbrella to be closed. Two more days were spent in this effort; and, just as the catch snapped on the handle, a thunderstorm came up, and it rained all day. Then the chieftain was mad. He called upon the medicine man, and was informed by that official that it would certainly rain day after to-morrow. So the umbrella was ordered up again. There was about thirty-six or thirty-seven showers while the myrmidons were struggling with the monster, and just as it was fairly open the sun came out with terrific force. And then it stayed out. There was not a drop of rain, nor as much as a cloud in the sky, for one hundred and seventy-seven days, and the African potentate snorting around mad as fury all the time. At the end of that period the chieftain went out, and killed his medicine-man with a boomerang, and ordered the umbrella down. The very next morning it began to rain, and it has been raining ever since. The friends of the Lord of the Umbrella have advised him to commit suicide, and he thinks he will.

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The fair Lydia was interviewed at length in St. Louis by a Democrat reporter, who concluded his report in the following lively style:—

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"Why, no."

"Is your hair bleached?"

"Certainly not; that is its natural color."

"I've heard that you wear a wig."

"You can try it, if you like."

She took down her hair, and the reporter grasped it in both hands. He put his foot on her shoulder and pulled. She cried for mercy, but he had made up his mind not to let personal considerations stand in the way of his investigations in the cause of science.

"Are you satisfied?" she gasped.

"Not yet," he answered.

He took a bight around the leg of the table, and hauled.

"I think it's a wig!" he shouted, as he took another turn,

The table leg broke off short, but he caught the door-knob and pulled her over a chair. The chandelier caught his eye, and he threw the hair over it. Hand over hand he hauled, and up she went till her head touched the burner. Taking a hitch around the sofa, he folded his arms and stood contemplating her."

"Let me down!" she demanded.

"Do you own up to a wig?"

"I do, I do!"

A SAD CASE.

"Adonis," who does well to send his grievances to us, writes as follows: "Eight years ago I fell in love with a young lady, and have been going to see her ever since on an average of about four nights a week. I had reason to believe my love was reciprocated, and we were looked upon as engaged. But on New Year's Eve, when I called, I found a young man sitting very close beside her, just as if *he* had known her for eight years too. Before I had time to demand an explanation, her father called me to the entry door, and asked if I 'didn't think I had been foolin' around his house about long enough?' and then he kicked me off the front stoop, out into the snow-clad street. Now, under these circumstances, do you think I would be justified in breaking off my engagement with the girl, and staying away from her father's house hereafter?" We do, most emphatically. Should you go back to the house, and refuse to break the engagement, her father might break your head.—*Norristown Herald.*

SPICE.

A DANBURY young man in the ardor of his affection promised to cherish one of our young ladies with a love that would survive an army overcoat.

AN old lady described a genius as "a man what knows more'n he can find out, and spills vittels on his clothes."

A DANBURY man was explaining to his wife Sunday morning how his mother used to cook pancakes, when she interrupted him with the batter pitcher. He is now experimenting with a new kind of salve.

AN absurd impression used to prevail that lawyers were sharks, and many curdling stories have been told of their rapacity. It was once generally understood that if a man went to law, the lawyers would pluck him bare of money, property, the clothes on his back, and the very skin on his body. But things are changed now, very much changed. They leave the skin.—*Danbury News.*

ONE, TWO, THREE.

I know a shady bower,
A sweet, secluded nook,
Where many a bright-eyed flower
Bends down to kiss the brook.
My path lies down a hollow,
Where rippling waters run;
I hope no one will follow,
For there's only room for one.

But if a bonnie maiden
(Whose name I dare not tell)
Should, with wild flowers laden,
Draw near my bosky dell,
I, in a voice caressing,
Would tell, and tell her true,
That with a little pressing
There might be room for two.

I'd crown her with wild roses,
I'd throne her on the green,
And whilst she there reposes
I'd kneel before my queen.
Should any one perceive us
In this we'd both agree,
We'd tell them to believe us,
There was not room for three.

"A Mercenary Little Woman."

WRITTEN FOR THE SATURDAY EVENING POST,

BY ANNE L. FORCELLE.

"Oh, dear!" said Mrs. Colchester, dispairingly, "we don't want a machine, I am sure; and if we did, we couldn't take one now. I've no doubt your machine is splendid, but—" and then a look of relief smoothed all the little wrinkles out of her worried face, as she heard a clear young voice ringing out in the hall above her.

"'When love is kind,
Cheerful and free,
Love's sure to find
Welcome from me.'"

"There's Kate," she said, looking at the sewing-machine man with a half-triumphant expression in her mild eyes.

And then the light footsteps came nearer.

"'But when Love brings
Heartache or pang,
Tears and such things,
Love may go hang.'

Good gracious!"

The somewhat abrupt and unsatisfactory termination of the song was due to the fact that the young lady, coming suddenly around the corner of the stairway, found herself face to face with an utter stranger, and realized instantly the harrowing fact that her head was ornamented with a bright turban, and that her unladylike feat of jumping down the last three stairs must have betrayed the fact that her boots were unpardonably shabby, if her pinned-up dress did not.

"Kate, my dear," said her mother, indicating the young gentleman in the doorway, "this is a new sewing-machine. Do you think—"

And then Kate, looking up, discovered that the "sewing-machine" was very good-looking, and that it possessed a pair of wide, blue eyes that were, at that moment dancing with amusement. Kate immediately became highly indignant:—what right had he to laugh at her mother's mistakes, or at her own head-dress?—She became very erect, and drew down the corners of her pretty mouth in evident displeasure and disapprobation.

"I see it is a new kind," she said, "but we don't want one."

"But, Kate," objected Mrs. Colchester, who, now that her daughter came to her rescue so decidedly, was half-inclined to argue the subject, and did not wish to end the interview so suddenly! "We don't know what an excellent machine this may be which this young gentleman represents."

"And we don't wish to," said Kate severely, looking up at the "young gentleman," and then suddenly down at one of her shabby boots. "If it were the best machine in the world we couldn't buy it this fall—we couldn't think of it."

The "sewing-machine man" looked politely regretful.

"I am sorry," he said, stuffing his books into his pocket and drawing on his gloves. "Perhaps if I call again—the last of the week, say on Saturday—you may feel differently about it?"

And then, as he departed, Kate turning a reproachful look upon her mother.

"Oh, mother, mother!" she cried, "how *could* you?"

"How could I what?" said the astonished matron; "I have not done anything."

"But you ought to. The idea of your letting him come again! Why didn't you just say 'no,' severely? then he wouldn't have dared to intrude upon us again."

And then the utter absurdity of her remarks suddenly occured to her.

"You poor dear, little mother!" she said, laughing—(although there were tears in her eyes; it was so hateful to be poor, and have to wear shabby boots, and do one's own work—and to be caught looking like a "fright," by an aggravatingly handsome young fellow—even if he were only a "sewing-machine man.") "The idea of your being 'severe' to any one, is out of the question entirely. And I won't scold. I wish you could have the machine, if you want it, but you'll have to wait until I am married; then you shall have all the machines you want. I'm going to marry a rich man, you know."

Mrs. Colchester shook her head gravely, as she looked at her pretty daughter.

"Money isn't everything, Kittie. You couldn't be happy with just money alone; and you can be happy without it. Look at your father and me."

"You two were made for each other," said Kate; "that makes all the difference in the world. I am an 'odd one,' as they say, and shall marry for money or not marry at all. I am a mercenary little woman, and woe to the moneyed man that comes in my way!" and then Kate went up-stairs "to get the duster," as she said, but, in very truth, to look in the glass and see if she really did look "perfectly awful" with her pretty hair covered with a gay, striped handkerchief, and her dress pinned up over her balmoral.

On Saturday, as luck would have it, Kate's twelve-year-old brother answered the door-bell, and reported to his mother and Kate that there was "a fellow up in the parlor that wanted to see somebody."

"Who on earth is it?" queried Kate, in much confusion, for a caller was quite an event in her quiet life. "Did he give you his name!"

"No," said the unsatisfactory boy; "I didn't ask him. He looks like the feller that came home with Cousin Tom, last summer, from college."

"Mr. Hammond?" cried Kate, flushing rosy red, for there had been a slight flirtation between herself and this same Mr. Hammond during Tom's vacation; and then she ran up-stairs to make a hasty toilet, while her mother went into the parlor to welcome the caller.

Ten minutes after, the parlor door opened and Kate came in, the shabby boots hidden by the sweeping skirt of her blue dress, a blue ribbon in her brown hair, and her pretty face bright with smiles; but the first word which she heard, as she stood for a moment on the threshold, brought a sudden light to her, and made her long to box her provoking brother's ears—that word was "sewing-machines."

It was too late to retreat, however, and so she advanced bravely.

PERSONAL EXPERIENCE BETTER THAN BOOK-LEARNING.

GOVERNESS.—"Well, and so they export wheat and cotton. Now, you've seen wheat in the ear, but not *cotton!*"

PUPIL.—Oh, yes, I have! *Grandpa*, you know!"

"Oh, Kate!" said her mother, rising as she approached, "I want you to talk with this gentleman about the machine! I'm half inclined to take one on trial; but I've got to go down and see about the baking, and you can understand about it more quickly than I;" and, before Kate could frame an excuse, Mrs. Colchester was gone, and she was left alone with the "sewing-machine man," whom she immediately assured that she "didn't want and couldn't take a machine." Queerly enough, after the first minute or two, sewing-machines were not mentioned, and Kate's disappointment was almost forgotten (for Mr. Hammond was not over brilliant at the best) in the pleasant conversation of the handsome caller.

He *was* handsome, and Kate's appreciative eyes noted the neatness of his dress, his manly bearing, and his frank, candid expression; and by degrees she forgot the shabby boots and turbaned head of the day or two before, and was her own bright, winsome self. At last he rose to go, and then, with a gleam of fun in his wide eyes, he laid an "instruction book" on the table. "For your mother," he said. "I'll call again, and see if you don't think better of your decision,—if I may?" And Kate, who had been so fiercely opposed to such a proceeding only three days before, smiled a bright little smile, and was not "severe" at all.

The next week he came again, and then, two or three days after, he brought a machine "for trial," he explained to Kate, who strongly opposed such a proceeding; and after that he was at the house frequently, to "explain the management of it." And Kate began to think that the life of a "sewing-machine man" must be very tiresome, if he had to spend so much time "explaining" to every one.

One day, however, as he was showing Kate about the "ruffler," he did something at once unexpected and novel. He asked the young lady point-blank to marry him.

For once in her life, Kate was rendered completely speechless. She ceased moving the treadle, and sat for a moment staring at him in perfect bewilderment.

"You don't mean it?" she said, at last. "Why—why, I don't even know your name!"

The young fellow actually laughed.—"That's odd," he said. "I thought you knew that long ago—it's Frank Richardson—and about the other, I *do* mean it most assuredly—will you marry me?"

"I—I can't," said Kate, feebly trying to release her hands, of which he had taken possession.

"Why? Don't you love me? Couldn't you ever learn to love me?"

"It isn't that," said Kate, still pulling her hands away.

"What is it then?" demanded he.

"Because," said Kate at last, becoming slightly desperate, "because you are only a 'sewing-machine man,'" and then her hands were suddenly released, and "the sewing-machine man" rose to his feet, pale and stern.

"That's reason enough," he said. "Good-bye, Miss Colchester," and he was gone.

The next week passed slowly by, Kate experimented with the "ruffler," (ruining it forever by the way,) and looked out of the window a great deal, but Frank Richardson did not appear, and then day after day passed and Kate ceased looking out of the window, and contracted the injurious habit of crying herself to sleep very softly at night.

"Of course," she said to herself, "I wouldn't marry a 'sewing-machine man,' but it was cruel to cast it in his face—he was so good and kind. How white and angry he looked when he went out! I wish—I wish—" and then the tears would come again.

Suddenly, however, a new personage made his appearance; a Mr. Worthington, a college friend of her father's in his boyish years, returned from India where he had spent nearly all his life, and came, like an elderly fairy-prince, into the small town of Easton.

He renewed the old friendship with Mr. Colchester, and was evidently much pleased with his old friend's daughter, for he soon became a regular visitor at the little white house, and at last one day he had a private interview with Mr. Colchester, and asked to be permitted to marry Kate.

At last the dream of her whole life had come true—the "moneyed man" had appeared, and it needed only one little word from her to make all the coming years like a fairy-tale—full of all things rich and fine—but now she hesitated to speak that word—foolish Kate!

"Don't hurry about making up your mind," said Mr. Worthington kindly—"take time. I'll ask you for your answer in a week's time," and so Kate was left to her meditations.

"Shall I, or shall I not?" was the question which haunted her, waking or sleeping, "Shall I, or shall I not?"—but, all the time her heart said distinctly and decidedly, "You shall not."

"I declare," said Mrs. Colchester, on the morning of the fifth day, as Kate came languidly down-stairs, her hair unbound and falling loosely around her shoulders—pale-faced, heavy-eyed, and bringing with her the odor of camphor—a sure sign of a headache, "that sewing-machine has been here three months and no one has called to see about it since that young Richardson went away so suddenly. I wonder what offended him; he seemed pleasant enough all along, and your father says that he has heard of him as a very excellent young man—good family, and everything of that kind—wasn't it queer for him to stop coming so suddenly?"

"Very," assented Kate, wearily, and then, as her mother went out into the garden, she sat down by the machine for the first time in weeks, and began idly to turn the wheel.

Her mother's words had brought up before her with cruel distinctness Frank Richardson's white face on that last day, and as she sat there, her pretty head drooped on her folded arms, and the hot tears came in a sudden shower.

The outer door was open and she heard her mother talking to some of the children in the back garden, and then, hearing a step in the passage, she raised her head and commenced "running" the machine in order to conceal the fact that she had been crying, under the guise of great industry, although the tears still blinded her.

"I beg your pardon," said an even voice beside her, "it is against rules to run the machine with the presser-foot down, and no work underneath;" and then Kate, looking up, met the calm gaze of Frank Richardson's handsome eyes, and tried hard to seem indifferent and unconcerned.

"Thank you," she said, and then he drew a chair to him and sat down beside her.

"What are you crying about?" he asked, looking at her gravely. "Tell me."

The tears came again in spite of her efforts to control herself, and she hid her face in her hands.

"Tell me," he repeated.

"How dare you order me?" she cried, with a little flash of defiance, and then she melted again. "I was very saucy and impertinent to you when I last saw you, and I beg your pardon."

"It was I who was impertinent," he said, "'only a sewing-machine man'—I ought to have known better. Don't cry any more." But cry she did, until a strong but gentle hand took possession of both hers and held them firmly. "Don't cry," he repeated. "I love you just the same if you can't love me, and I was not angry—only hurt. I am sorry I troubled you by saying what I did, but I couldn't help it, and I am afraid I shall say it again if I stay here any longer."

Just then Kate's handkerchief dropped, and as he returned it, his eyes met hers for a moment, and a sudden light came to him.

"It can't be, Kate," he cried, "that after all you really *could*—" And Kate just laid her pretty head on his shoulder, and then—

When Mrs. Colchester came in from the garden, Kate, flushed and dimpling with smiles, was sitting before the sewing-machine, with Frank Richardson beside her, and Mrs. Colchester turned fairly faint as she saw a coat-sleeved arm around her daughter's slender waist.

"Why, Kate," she exclaimed, "what does this mean?"

And then Kate smiled sweetly, and Frank, holding her a little closer, answered for her. "It means that this mercenary little woman is going, after all, in case her kind parents have no objection, to marry a sewing-machine man!"

From the Dubuque Herald, Jan. 21.

A Western Marriage.

HELPING A FRIEND IN TROUBLE.

A citizen of Wright county, Iowa, writing to friends in Dubuque, tells about a matrimonial send-off that occurred there recently which seems savory and interesting.

Rice, a school-teacher, living near Webster City, is the father of two blooming daughters, the eldest of whom was engaged to be married to a member of the interminable family of John Smiths. They burned the midnight oil and tallow dips under the paternal roof to their hearts' content, and were married last week. John Smith had a friend called Peter Brown, another aristocratic cognomen of few possessors, and Peter was a bachelor; he had tried to marry, but always had ill-luck making himself acceptable to the fair sex. Peter had confided to John the story of his reverses among the ladies, and a bond of sympathy was sealed between them.

One day, previous to his wedding, John told Peter he thought he could get him a wife, referring to the schoolmaster's younger daughter. "Come with me when I'm going to be married, to-morrow, John, and perhaps I can give you a lift." Peter assented and on the following day, at the appointed hour, the bridegroom and his friend appeared at the house of the bride's father, ready for the ceremony. The family group was assembled in the best parlor, a few friends were present, the country 'Squire had wiped his glasses and was about to begin the ceremony, when Smith stepped back, and addressed his intended wife's sister with:

"See here, Jane, my friend Brown has been trying to get a wife; he's a good man, and, if you expect me to marry your sister, you've got to marry Brown; and we'll all be married at the same time. What d'ye say?"

The bride and her family winced somewhat under this demand in matrimony made by the groom, and the younger sister's face was wreathed in carnations of blushes; there was a general family flutter. All eyes were turned toward the groom to see if he faltered in his demand, but he did not, and after some minutes' hesitation, Jane consented, rather than break in upon her sister's matrimonial prospects. The squire married the four there and then, and after the splicing was through with, hearty congratulations followed, and the parties have settled down to married life in comfortable homes near Webster City.

Answers to Correspondents.

PAY YOUR POSTAGE.—Authors and others often send us letters and manuscripts not fully paid. In these cases the Department here enforces *double* rates on the deficiency—which we either have to pay, or to decline receiving the letters or manuscripts. Authors will also bear in mind that the Department now requires letter postage on all manuscripts—therefore it is often cheaper, as it is always safer, to send large packages by express.

VERI VIDI.—The poem is tolerable, but we cannot say certainly whether it will appear. There are so many sent to us that would do, that we cannot print all of them. We do not often pay for poetry—nor ever give advice respecting it, point out deficiencies, etc.

JENOWA, (Buffalo, N. Y.), writes: "I would be glad to have you answer the following question: "Is there any Bible account of Mary, the mother of Christ, having any other children? This question is in dispute in this vicinity." And yet we were weak enough to suppose that the Bible had advanced to the vicinity of Buffalo. We must be mistaken, however, for such a question could not be in dispute if there were any Bible readers in that vicinity. If you really have a copy of the New Testament, you need only turn to the sixth chapter of Mark, third verse, for a settlement of the dispute. You will find there the names of Christ's four brothers, and also the fact that he had sisters.

ENQUIRER, (Steuben Co., N. Y.,) writes: "I have been a subscriber to the Post for some time, and now wish the privilege of asking a few questions. 1st. What is the difference between pence and cents—and are not pence used in England at the present time, and are they not used by merchants? 2d. Is the present year in which we live the 1879th year? Our teachers here contend that we are now living in the 79th year of the 19th century. 3d. What is the principal crop raised in farming in Florida—and what can land there be bought for per acre?" 1st. The cent is the smallest American coin. The penny, or pence in the plural, is an English copper coin, worth nearly two of our cents. The English coinage was in common use in this country before the Revolution, and the names penny and shilling are still largely employed, though not at all applicable to our money. These coins are of course in general use by English merchants, but not by our merchants, except in cases of business dealings with England. 2d. We do not know what you mean by the 1879th year. The present is the year 1873 of the Christian era, and the 74th year of the 19th century. Have you correctly understood your teachers? 3. Florida is not particularly adapted to the raising of our northern products. It is most prolific in fruits. The orange is raised there to a large extent, there being more than 150,000 trees cultivated. The lemon also grows in great perfection, and a large number of semi-tropical fruits are cultivated. The cranberry culture is said to be very successful. Only a small proportion of the soil of the State is good for cultivation—and we are not aware of its selling price.

OLIVIA writes: "1st. Please answer through correspondents' column what is the best way to put up MSS., to be sent off for publication, whether folded or in a roll? 2d. If a lady meets an old acquaintance on the street, whom she has not seen for some time, is it improper for her to invite him to call on her, or should she wait for him to propose to do so?" 1st. It is best folded. If rolled it is difficult to straighten it out, and put it in proper shape for reading. 2d. It is perfectly proper for her to give him such an invitation. It would not answer, as a general rule, to wait for parties to propose visiting, without an invitation. It would seem to be the lady's part to invite, premising, of course, that he is a desirable acquaintance.

COUNTRY BOY, (Pella, Iowa), writes: "You will oblige me by answering the following questions: 1st. "Have you back numbers of THE POST beginning with the first of 1870, to the end of the story of George Canterbury's Will, by Mrs. Henry Wood? If so, can you send them, and at what price? 2d. What do you think of the moral influence of reading novels, for young people? 3d. How do you think the Stokes trial will end? 4th. What do you think of my handwriting, grammar and orthography?" 1st. We have one set left of the numbers containing that story, 36 papers. Price, $2.1s. 2d. The word novel embraces a very wide range of literature, partly very poorly, partly very well, calculated for the moral advancement of young people. It is not, as a general thing, desirable that young persons should choose their own reading, without supervision by persons of greater age and more experience. There is always danger of their selecting an unhealthy class of literature, of which there is a plethora now in the market. But there is an abundance of novel literature, both in book and periodical form, whose influence is likely to be beneficial, by improving the imagination, aiding in the development of taste, and fostering correct sentiments and a high standard of public morality. Young people need not be debarred from their natural desire for novel literature, but proper care should be taken in the selection of their reading. 3d. The trial has ended in a verdict of guilty. Application has been made for a new trial. 4th. They all need improvement.

THUMPS, (Ohio,) asks: "Will you inform me from what the expression, 'Black as the ace of spades,' originated?" It originated, no doubt, among card-players, but how, or when, is not known, so far as we can ascertain. It is one of those expressions which arise, nobody knows when, and attain popularity, nobody knows why. It may be that the special prominence of the ace of spades in a pack of cards suggested the idea of giving its blackness precedence over that of the other black cards.

E. O. M., (Naperville, Ill.,) writes: "I am a constant reader of the dear old Post, and have been taking it for the last four years. I am a farmer, and twenty-four years of age. About three years ago I fell in love with a lady. I have since taken her where I went, to dances and parties, and have visited her often. She is of a respectable family, intelligent and industrious, but her parents are not very wealthy. She earns her own livelihood, by working by the week. Now my parents seem to be a little opposed to my marriage, for the reason that she is not wealthy. I will be honest and tell you that I love the girl as I shall never love another. Yet I don't like to disobey my parents. My father is wealthy, but I have no capital at all. Now what must I do? Had I better take my own advice or my parents? Please give me a word to help me out of this dilemma." "You are of sufficient age to decide for yourself in such a case, if you are of sufficient judgment and discretion. Yet we would not advise you to act against the wishes of your parents, especially as you have no money to support a family. If there is no other obstacle to your marriage than the one you mention, they may change to your opinion, and it will not hurt you to remain single for two or three years more, and try to make and save something. It is more than folly to marry, unless you are able to support yourselves comfortably afterwards. Time is powerful at removing obstacles and reversing opinions.

SCHOOL GIRL, (Oneida, N. Y.,) says: "I have taken the liberty to ask a question, which I am very anxious to have answered. How and of what is nitro-glycerine made; what makes it so explosive; and how can it be handled?" Nitro-glycerine is a compound of glycerine with nitric and sulphuric acids. The glycerine is dissolved in a mixture of equal measures of the strongest nitric and sulphuric acids, previously cooled. The mixture is poured in a thin stream into a large volume of water, in which the nitro-glycerine precipitates as a heavy, colorless oil. Rapid chemical change is caused in it by any disturbance, with instantaneous evolution of a large quantity of gas. The expansion of this gas causes the explosion. It can only be handled with the utmost care not to disturb it, and is safest not handled at all.

[Several letters are held over to be answered in our next.]

RECEIPTS.

TO STEW PIKE—*Ingredients.*—A pike, or part of one, one egg, bread-crumbs, two onions, herbs, two anchovies, ketchup, mace, a little garlic, and a wineglass of port wine. A red herring may be added if it can be had.

Mode.—Cut the fish in fillets, egg and bread-crumbs, and fry a nice brown; take out and fry the onion and herbs, then add a quarter of a pint of gravy with the other ingredients, and stew for an hour; put in the fish, and stew for half an hour longer.

TO USE UP COLD MEATS.—If you have a few bits of meat and two or three cold potatoes left over, put some drippings into a skillet, slice the potatoes thin, cut the meat up tolerably fine, and add pepper and salt to taste; then beat two or three eggs, according to the size of the dish to be prepared, stir them into a cup of milk or cream and pour over the meat and potatoes. If eggs are not plenty, use fewer eggs and more milk or cream; and if eggs are plenty and milk and cream is not, the latter may be omitted, that is the milk or cream. Warm the meat and potato by itself until sufficiently hot for the table, then stir in the egg, stirring constantly until the eggs are cooked. Do not leave it an instant after adding the eggs, for they would be likely to burn and ruin the whole. Sometimes I line a nappy with dough made as for biscuit, cut my cold meat into small pieces and put in. If there is not meat enough to fill it slice raw potatoes thin, put in a layer of meat then of potato, season with pepper and salt, then another layer of each, and so on until the nappy is nearly full, then add a little water, or cold gravy, and place on top a thick crust of the dough made quite short. Bake slowly.

APPLE DUMPLINGS.—Pare, quarter and core some tart apples and half fill a three-pint dish, and nearly cover them with water. Make a crust of one pint of flour, one teaspoonful of cream of tartar, one-half teaspoonful of soda, one cup of milk, roll out and cover the apples, place it on top of the stove and put another dish the same size over it, and let it steam and cook half an hour. For sauce take two large spoonfuls of butter mixed with one spoonful of flour, add one pint of boiling water, stir quickly and let it boil, and two-thirds cup of sugar, half a nutmeg, a little salt, and let it boil.

BAKED INDIAN PUDDING.—Ten tablespoonfuls of meal, three pints of milk, one large cup of molasses, three tablespoonfuls chopped suet. Bake two and a half hours, stirring till it begins to thicken.

TO STEW OYSTERS.—To one hundred oysters take one quart of milk, half a pint of water, four spoonsful of flour, half a cup of butter, and one teaspoonful of salt, with a very little Cayenne pepper. Boil and skim the liquor of the oysters. Steam the flour and butter over the tea-kettle until soft enough to beat to a froth; then stir it in the liquor while boiling; after which add the other ingredients, and throw in the oysters, allowing them merely to scald.

EVE'S PUDDING.—Grate three-fourths of a pound of stale bread, and mix it with three-fourths of a pound of fine suet, the same quantity of chopped apples and dried currants, five eggs, and the rind of a lemon, put into a mould and boil it three hours; serve it with sweet sauce.

ROCKY MOUNTAIN CAKE.—*The White.*—Take two eggs; one cup of sugar; one-half cup of butter; two cups flour; one-half cup of milk; two teaspoonfuls cream tartar; one teaspoonful soda.

The Dark.—One cup of molasses; one cup of butter; one-half cup of cold water; one large teaspoonful soda; cloves and nutmeg.

RIDDLER.

Charades, Riddles, Problems, etc., must always be accompanied by their answers, or they will not be published.

All who take an interest in this column are respectfully invited to contribute.

BIBLICAL ENIGMA.

WRITTEN FOR THE SATURDAY EVENING POST.

I am composed of 42 letters.

My 1, 16, 10, 30, 30, 7, 4, 18, was the name of one of Christ's Apostles.

My 23, 6, 14, 27, 11, 26, 8, 28, 30, 12, 19, 25, was the name of the king of Babylon that lifted up one of the kings of Judah out of prison.

My 3, 39, 20, 11, 11, 21, 31, was the name of one of the spies that Moses sent to spy out the land of Canaan.

My 5, 31, 9, 25, 22, 16, 37, 5, 10, was the name of King Solomon's mother.

My 11, 26, 33, 16, 14, 5, 35, 3, 25, 37, 1, 39, was the name of one of Jonathan's sons to whom King David showed kindness for his father's sake, and restored to him all the land of Saul.

My 13, 17, 40, 7, 36, 23, 16, was the name of the great city to which God commanded Jonah to cry against, for its wickedness had gone up before him.

My 11, 17, 19, 31, 14, 20, 39, was the name of the prophet that foretold King Ahab's death.

My 19, 41, 34, 15, 37, 27, 14, 4, 22, was the name of a centurion of the Italian band. He was commanded by an angel to send for Peter the Apostle, that he might hear the doctrine of Christ.

My 33, 2, 18, 42, 14, 4, 22, 32, 17, 27, 12, 9, 26, was the name of the governor who delivered Jesus unto the Jews to be crucified, and released unto them Barabbas.

My whole is a verse in the Book of Lamentations.

RIDDLE.

WRITTEN FOR THE SATURDAY EVENING POST.

I am composed of four letters.
Omit my first, and I belong to the present.
Cut off my second, and I am an exclamation.
Expunge my third, and I am at the beginning of winter.
My 1, 3, 2, is a relative.
My 4, 3, 2, signifies success.
My 3, 4, 2, expresses exclusive right.
My whole is often to be seen at this time.

Baltimore, Md. EMILY.

BURIED CITIES.

WRITTEN FOR THE SATURDAY EVENING POST.

1st. He received a sabre stroke on his left arm.

4th. Barnstable, on Cape Cod bay, is noted for fisheries.

3d. It was either Æsop or Tom that did the mischief.

4th. Jacob lent Zena one of his books.

5th. He stayed at Senegran a day and a half.

6th. He was an expert hand in the use of the rifle.

7th. He hesitated, but Chorbo urged him onward.

8th. It happened October nineteenth.

SYLVANUS O.

WORD SQUARES.

WRITTEN FOR THE SATURDAY EVENING POST.

I.
An amusement.
A man's name.
A repast.
A lady's name.

II.
A flower.
A quality of a flower.
Persons of the masculine gender.
A dialect of the Celtic tongue.

III.
True.
Otherwise.
A large country.
Steadfast, true. BERTHA.

PROBLEM.

WRITTEN FOR THE SATURDAY EVENING POST.

A man having a flock of sheep, sold five-sixths of their number; he then bought six more than the number he had left; then again he sold the one-tenth part of the flock he now had, and bought again four more sheep than the one-third of the number he had left just previous to this last purchase. After all this twice selling and buying he had one sheep more than the one-half of the number he had at first. How many had he then? X.

ANSWERS TO LAST.

SCRIPTURAL ENIGMA.—Be not deceived; evil communications corrupt good manners.—1 Corinthians, chap. 15, verse 33.

BURIED CITIES.—1. Altona. 2. Verona. 3. Labore. 4. Glasgow. 5. Metz. 6. St. Denis. 7. Waterford. 8. Patna.

WORD SQUARES.—

I.	II.	III.
ARAB	HEAD	CORN
ROPE	EDGE	OHIO
APES	AGES	RIOT
BEST	DESK	NOTE

IV.	V.
LEAP	HOME
EARL	OPAL
AREA	MARL
PLAT	ELLA

ANAGRAM.—
I dream of tender voices
That I have never heard,
As full of glad, blithe music,
As the song of any bird.

ARITHMETICAL QUESTION.—$1.68¾.

☞ It is estimated that the drowning capacity of the Erie canal averages five boys a week.

☞ A man has been consigned to the penitentiary for stealing a pin. This looks to be a little hard upon the poor fellow until you come to know that it was a diamond attached to the pin which sent him up the spout.

☞ If girls would have roses for their cheeks, they must do as the roses do—go to sleep with the lilies, and get up with the morning-glories.